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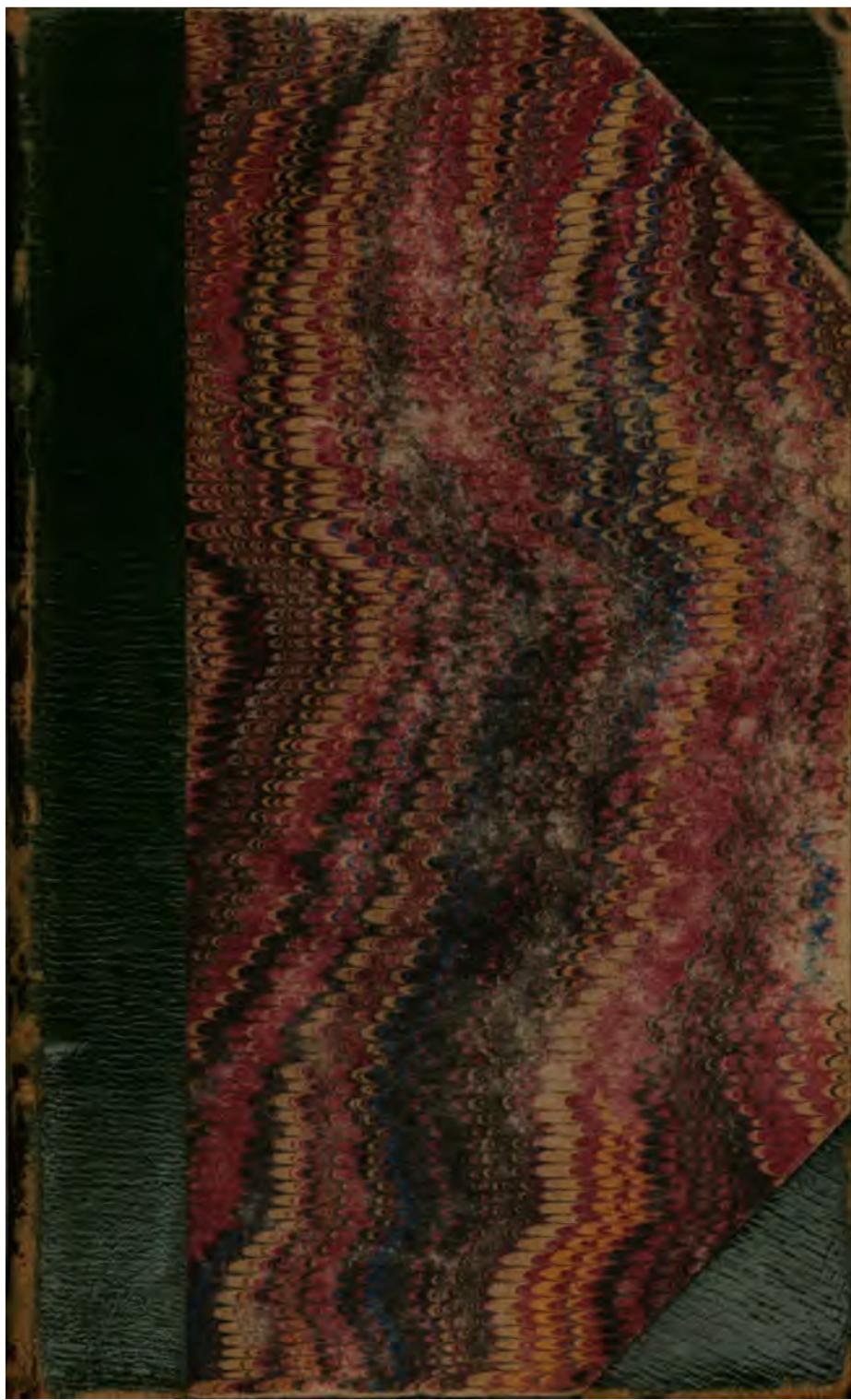
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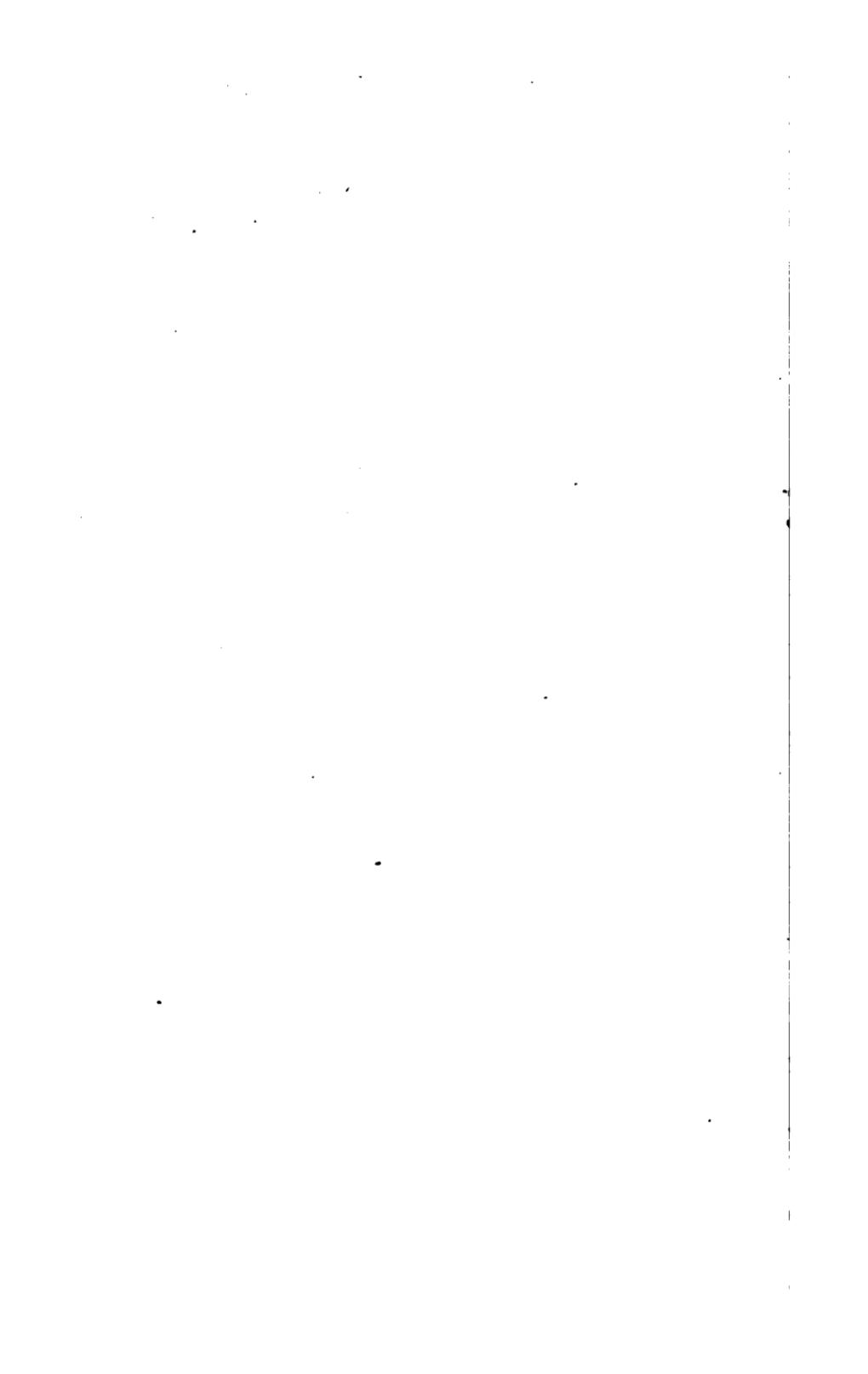
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MEMOIRS OF A PICTURE:

CONTAINING

THE ADVENTURES OF MANY CONSPICUOUS CHARACTERS,

And interspersed with a variety

OF AMUSING ANECDOTES OF SEVERAL VERY EXTRAORDINARY
PERSONAGES CONNECTED WITH THE ARTS;

Including

A genuine Biographical Sketch of that celebrated original and eccentric Genius,
The late

MR. GEORGE MORLAND.

Drawn from the tolerably authentic source of more than twenty years' intimate
acquaintance with him, his family, and connections.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A COPIOUS APPENDIX,

Embracing every interesting subject relative to our justly admired
English Painter, and his most valuable works.

By WILLIAM COLLINS,

Author of the Slave Trade, a Poem; an Ode to Sir Jeffery Dunstan, an Heroic Effusion; with several detached Pieces in Prose and Verse; several of which have appeared in most of the public Papers, under various signatures, since the Year 1788, to the present Period.

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life,
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar, Act iv. Scene 3.

VOL. I.

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Author, 118, Great Portland Street.

1805.



Preface.

TO draw a faithful portrait of the folly, the prejudices, the vanity, and the vice of mankind, is an effort of no trifling difficulty: and one cause of this *obstacle* to success arises from a disposition in the *delineator* of manners, similar to that which generally prevails in the *painter of faces*, namely, a *certain habitual*, and sometimes an *involuntary bias towards flattery*.

Now as there is nothing which can stamp so much *intrinsic value* upon a family portrait with the existing relatives of the original, or their succeeding posterity, as a *rigid* attention to *accuracy of likeness* in the *delineator*; so are we bold enough to assert, that an inflexible adherence to a

faithful resemblance in the description of human actions, is equally valuable to man, and his succeeding generations. Convinced also, that in all ages, Providence hath kindly distributed amongst the sons and daughters of Adam, a certain portion of rational intellect; there must, therefore, of necessity exist a number of beings, capable of appreciating the *sterling value* of such an ingredient *as truth*, in every possible relation of active society.

Having thus sketched the outline of our picture, from which we shall never deviate, at least intentionally, and as, in the course of our profession as painters, a few distorted characters may now and then obtrude themselves, we have no other alternative then left, but to draw them accurately; and in pity to those errors inseparable from our nature, lament the deformities we cannot amend, but at the expence of injuring the truth of resemblance.

As to the arrangement of the several anecdotes and adventures contained in

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the following volumes, dates, and often names, have been frequently disguised, and sometimes wholly dispensed with. But the most scrupulous attention hath always been paid to their authenticity, and the justice of their application.

With respect to the principal characters, or the whole of the *dramatis personæ* which enliven and honour the following scenes in this *tragi-comic piece*; as it would be equally vain to acknowledge an imaginary portrait, as to deny one taken from the life; we shall, in all such cases, leave the *decision* to the *critical eye* of a *discriminating public*. Therefore, as the labour of even endeavouring to satisfy those who may fancy themselves introduced in grotesque situations or ludicrous caricatures, is a task no individual, however great, has any right to impose; we must humbly hope for permission from the public to decline; being well aware of the difficulty of convincing persons who may feel sore at a pointed joke, how very harmless the intention of the author of the jest was. But, of

one thing we can certainly assure our readers, that whether in jest or in earnest, throughout the whole of the following work, we have never lost sight of an opportunity, to the best of our endeavours, of promoting thereby, the real benefit and interest of our fellow-beings.

As to the chosen band of Philistines, who may be fairly included under the descriptive compound phrase, herein purposely coined for their distinction as a body-politic—namely, *the professors of picture-craft*: we say, of this multifarious class of bipeds, composed as they are of the most contradictory elements of chaotic atoms that ever occupied or burthened space, since the evening and morning which composed the first long day of the glorious creation; of these worthies, surely we may at least hope to claim the merit of a second rank from our labours, in preference to all other artists.

But we claim this distinction also, for having developed in the most clear and

simple manner, the whole arcana of the science of *picturecraft*, by which their right and title to such a respectable profession is amply demonstrated. Where the necessary qualifications of an adept are distinctly pointed out, in order to deter all interlopers from commencing an art without these requisite advantages.

From all which premises it clearly follows, that in the case of persons wanting any of the aforesaid qualities, we are enabled, and can positively insure these daring interlopers from every thing—but want of money, want of business, credit, success, and consequently want of friends. With all due deference, however, to those who may incline to a contrary opinion, if any one should be hardy enough, after this fair warning, to exhibit his folly, by seeking to gain admission to this respectable body; whatever may be the fatal consequences of his temerity, we shall not hesitate to pronounce, that his failure will not only be unpitied by every member and retainer of the said worthy fraternity, but ridiculed

also, for the entertainment of those who never laugh, but at the misfortunes of a brother. However, if the instances adduced throughout these volumes be not, as we should hope they are, sufficiently conclusive respecting the talents necessary to insure success in the business of picture-craft, and the fact should still remain problematical; we beg leave to refer our readers to more than a dozen notorious living witnesses, for a stronger demonstrative solution.

But least of all would we be understood, even in the most distant manner, to cast any thing like the shadow of a reflection upon the taste, knowledge, or understanding of those noblemen, and highly respected gentlemen, who have so generously contributed to raise from obscurity to saucy wealth, and proud independence, the various characters we have here portrayed. For although many an envious disappointed wight hath constantly asserted, that the only conspicuous traits among these worthy professors, are sheer ignorance and down-

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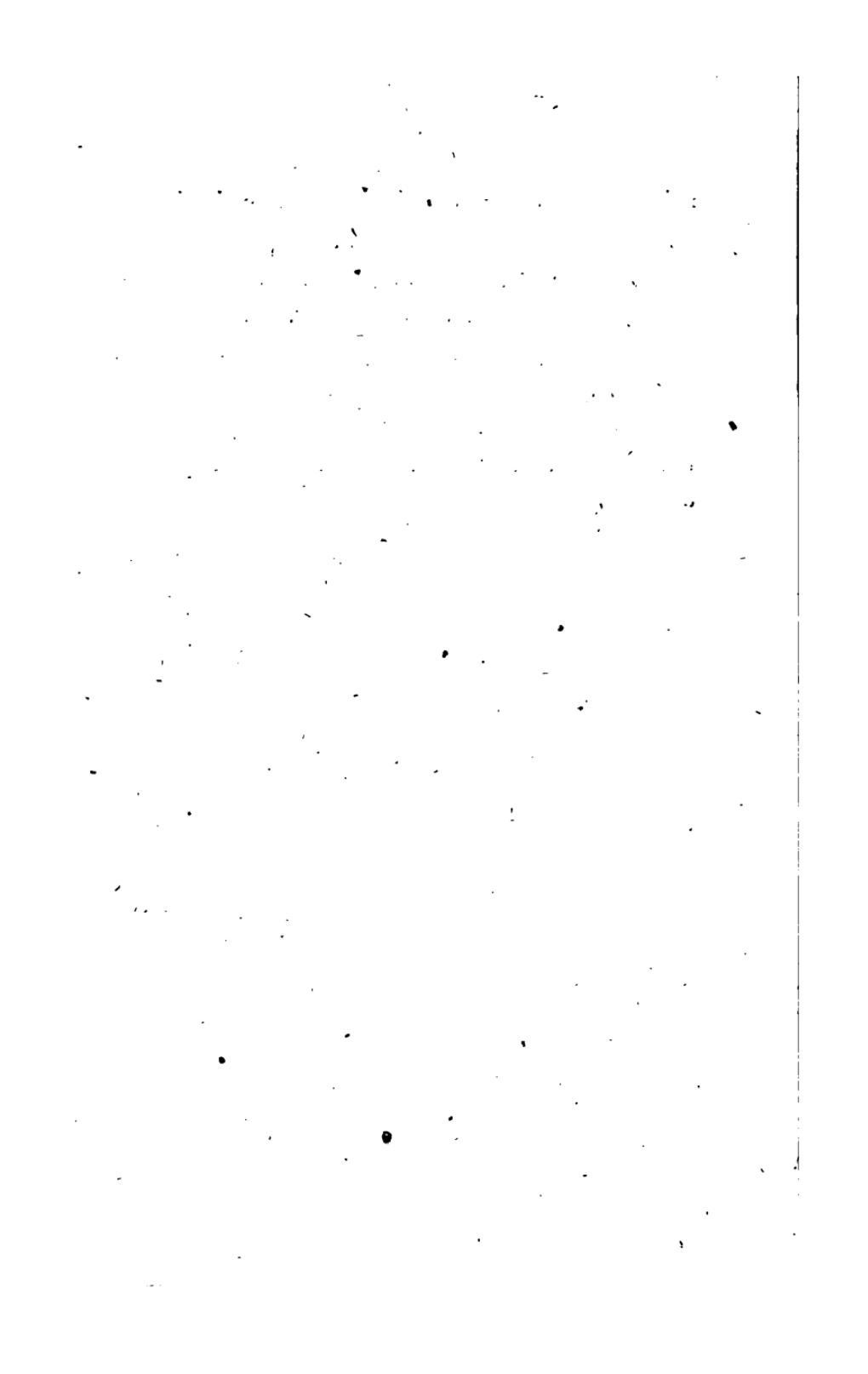
right knavery, aided by the additional thriving qualities of low-cunning and consummate effrontery; we dare affirm, that the penetration of such noble and judicious persons could never have been so grossly imposed upon, nor their protection obtained upon such shallow easy terms, as every sycophant may purchase at the expense of a little flattery.

We also disclaim, in the most general terms, every thing which may savour of national reflection; that being, of all the insidious, despicable, and impolitic prejudices which poison mental intercourse, and contaminate opinion, the most deadly also to every liberal affection of rational society. But if the profession we would fain rid of the noxious vermin and biting reptiles that have long degraded it, should harbour a number of transmarine insects more worthless and destructive than our own; a description and exposition of them, instead of being any reflection on the country that produced them, becomes an imperious duty.

One favour we now request, rather than claim as our undoubted right, of a particular class of readers, we mean such as have ability to judge when that judgment is not clouded by the vanity of their own fancied pre-eminence over their fellow-labourers in the more humble paths of literature. Of such we have to request a suspension of that absurd veneration, too often attached to mere names. And as several of these gentlemen have, to our own knowledge, candidly admitted, that in more instances than one, even men of talents have been indebted to something like good fortune in the sale of their labours; we would beg of them, and our other numerous acquaintance, to examine fairly the whole, without any retrospect to the success of the author, before they praise, or even censure the work.

But to consider above all, impartially, the tout-ensemble of our great comprehensive Picture, as well as the minutiae of the various passages, and parts which compose it. Still keeping in view the general eye and

principal design; which we have no doubt will procure it a place in the collection of the rational and liberal-minded amateur, artist, connoisseur, and dealer. And to every reader, we are equally sanguine in our hope of its being either useful, amusing, or instructive; to a few, perhaps, we may have the peculiar felicity of affording the triple advantage.



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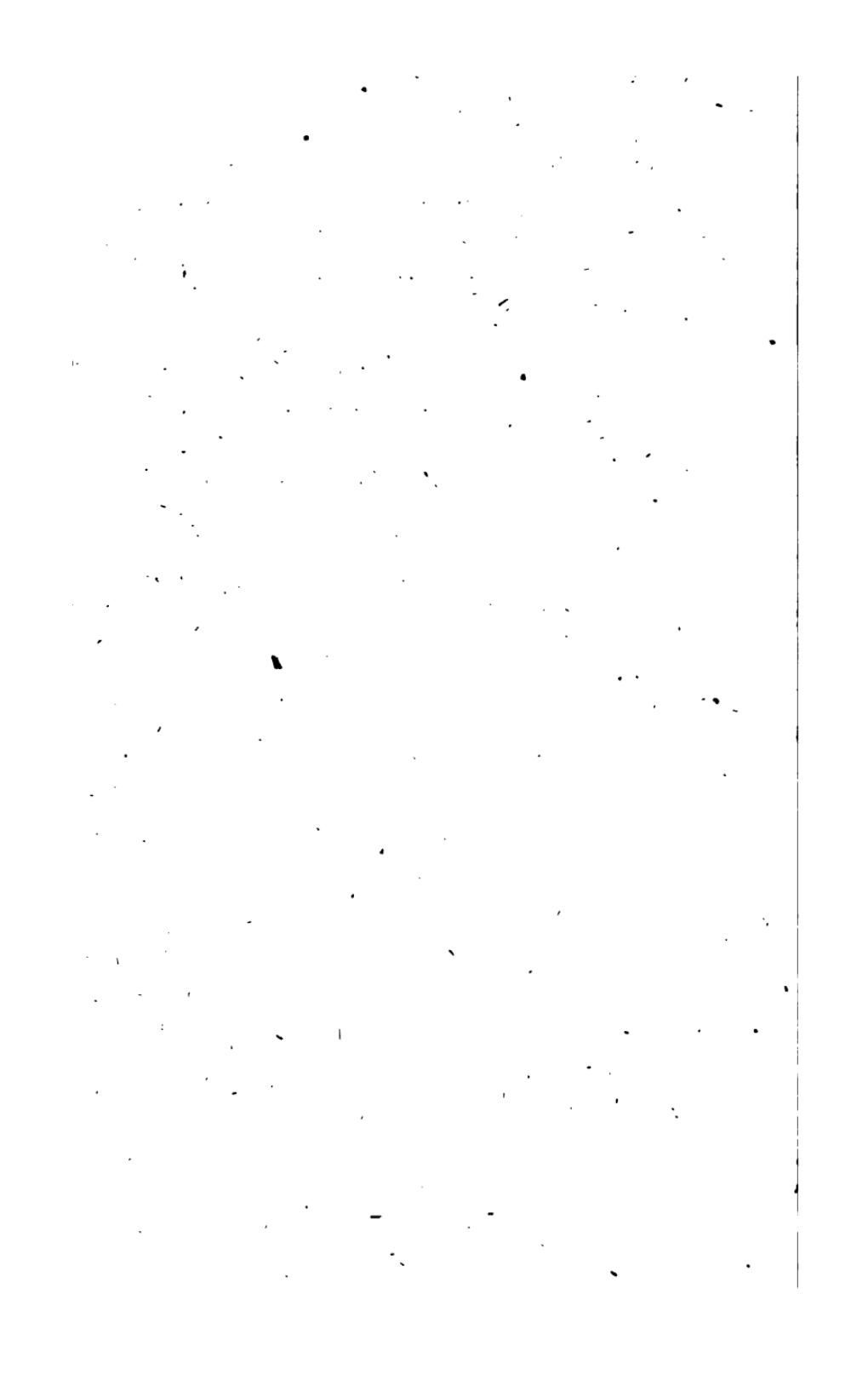
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Memoirs of a Picture.

CHAP I.

**AN APOLOGY FOR THE INACCURACY AND
OMISSION OF DATES—SKETCH OF THE
ORIGIN OF THE SUBJECT OF THESE ME-
MOIRS; GENERALLY SUPPOSED TO BE
THAT UNIQUE AND INESTIMABLE JEWEL
PAINTED BY THE IMMORTAL GUIDO,
AND STOLEN FROM THE ROYAL COLLEC-
TION OF FRANCE.**

AS every trivial deviation from general usages, although they may be too venial to reach the magnitude of a crime, require something like an apology from all innovators of customs so venerable, and justly established. It is therefore humbly presumed, for several obvious reasons, which must occur to any judicious reader, who may honor these volumes with a can-

did perusal, that an omission of a few uncertain particulars respecting dates, and the origin of the subject of the following Memoirs, will be deemed a pardonable offence, against the rigid laws of solemn biography.

We shall therefore, without the tedium of further prolixity, commence the history of our Picture at a period when every part of it was sound as health itself—when the harshness and raw sickly-green hue of youth had been mellowed down by the harmonising tints of time. In short, after a lapse of nearly two centuries and a half from its production, when first launched forth by its fond parent to undergo the fiery ordeal of judicious criticism ; we say, after that space of mellowing time had past over it so favorably, that its brilliant and fascinating eye delighted every beholder who had the least pretensions to virtù. Yet, alas ! after all this, one of those dreadful reverses of fortune befel our inimitable subject, which even a Stoic could not witness unmoved with all his pretended apathy.

In the month of ——, some time in the

memorable year 17—, our hitherto fortunate subject, after being long one of the chief attractions of the Royal Gallery of France, and all that splendid court, an adventurous marauder with the address and fortitude of a Spartan pickpocket, was fortunate enough to convey it from its enviable situation and distinguished rank, where it had shone unrivalled amidst a blaze of beauty for so many years.

After suffering many an hour of mental torture and bodily hardship by day and by night, in a dreary journey of more than a hundred miles, being afraid to travel by any direct road, and having narrowly escaped being murdered, this second Jason arrived on the frontiers in perfect safety with his prize. When, having deposited it safe, as he thought, for the present, determined to wait until the storm which he knew was gathering should subside, before he attempted to convert it into money. Nor was this precaution unnecessary, as subsequent events have sufficiently proved; for in less than twenty-four hours after his

departure the theft was discovered ; and every measure, which a then most vigilant police could devise, were instantly taken to prevent the escape of so daring a peculator.

Never were the merciful clergy, when in the very zenith of their power, known more zealous in their endeavours to detect a wretch guilty of blasphemy and sacrilege, than were the whole court of Louis, and all the connoisseurs and deletanti of Gaul at their back, to apprehend this plunderer of the Royal Gallery of the House of Bourbon.

Perhaps the rape and theft committed by the Trojan gallant upon the lovely half-yielding Grecian dame, who might have successfully contended for the prize of beauty on Mount Ida, with the three rival goddesses, was not more bitterly lamented by her disconsolate spousy, than was the loss of this our envied favourite by its royal, and for some time, distracted owner : and much to the credit of his judgment and his taste, be it recorded, that every impassioned

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sentence which escaped his lips, were additional proofs of the deepest regret, and the most ardent affliction.

Happy was it therefore, that our adventurer had the good fortune to make his escape; for even at that merciful period some have doubted whether the rack and wheel, with all their ingenious attendants, which had not even then been so completely abandoned, though seldom used, would not have been resorted to for the punishment of so capital a delinquent.

In short, the Chevalier Vanderwigtie, for such was his name, ran the most imminent danger of being detected; and had such been the case, nothing could have saved him from suffering the horrid delay of those dreadful engines of human destruction, so humanely calculated to prolong the torture of our wretched fellow-beings. At least such was the opinion of the chevalier, who never thought upon the danger he had thus exposed himself to, without shuddering.

But as our own historians of the first name have not scrupled to immortalize a Colonel Blood for his bold and nearly successful enterprize, of securing the crown, sceptre, and robes from the Tower of London; and another, in his celebrated parallel between two of the greatest men that ever graced the pages of the Grecian history and Newgate Calendar, namely, the matchless Jonathan Wild, and that crazy hero, Alexander, nicknamed the Great, in giving the palm to his countryman; although it may savour of something like partiality, has nevertheless deserved well of posterity. We say, if these elegant biographers have not thought it beneath them to perpetuate the exploits of their respective heroes, we may surely, without presumption, prefer our claim for the suffrages of our fellow citizens in behalf of our labours, for recording some of the most dexterous and unheard of exploits in the whole extensive history of depredators. And as the name and adventure of the renowned Jason, in stealing the Golden Fleece, is not, in our humble opinion, an exploit of greater celebrity, than

that of our chevalier's success, in stealing and escaping with a gem of no less value, from as many perils, and still more serious consequences in case of detection. It cannot be deemed unnecessary if we give our readers a short sketch of the life and singular exploits of a man to whom we are obliged, amongst other things of the last importance, for the subject of these original Memoirs..

CHAP. II.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CHEVALIER VANDERWIGTIE AND HIS HONORABLE DESCENT—
EFFECTS IN HIS EARLY HABIT OF EDUCATION—HE RUNS AWAY FROM SCHOOL,
AND ENLISTS FOR A SOLDIER CONTRARY TO THE REMONSTRANCES OF HIS FRIEND
THE PRIEST—DESERTS, AND IS TAKEN IN A FOREST BY A BANDITTI, THE CHIEF OF
WHOM WAS ABOUT TO SHOOT HIM.

THE Chevalier Vanderwigtie was descended from a very ancient and useful family, natives of Austrian Flanders, whose plebeian origin and name were both sunk, when one of their descendants was ennobled by Louis XIII. of France, son of the great Henry IV. about the period when the illustrious Richlieu rebuilt the celebrated college of the Sorbonne. This most christian monarch was graciously pleased to create and enoble Jean Jacques Knotterbotherwig, in the year 1629, for his eminent service about the decoration of the

articles of the royal wardrobe. Particularly for that elegant addition to the periuke, called knot or tie; and that all his successive heirs male, lawfully begotten, should henceforth bear the arms, and use the name and title of Chevalier de Vanderwigtie, instead of Knotterbotherwig. Which title, name, and dignity descended to our hero, who stole the subject of these Memoirs out of the Royal Gallery of France. He being the great grandson of the first ennobled of the Knottterbotherwigs, in regular lineal succession.

At a very early period, being then only in his sixth year, he was deprived of his mother, and in consequence of that event was sent to a cheap seminary, where he was boarded and lodged, but never educated; although he remained there for the space of eight years. Whether this circumstance arose from a natural antipathy to letters, to idleness, or a want of steady application, we have not been able fully to ascertain; but certain it is, and the future events of his life confirm and establish the fact, that his being nearly illiterate could

never be fairly ascribed to any want of natural talent or capacity ; as upon a variety of occasions, as well as the grand exploit of purloining the chef d'œuvre of the Royal Gallery, he has given indubitable proofs of both.

Having attained his fourteenth year without attiehing any thing of sufficient consequence worthy of being recorded in these Memoirs, a war breaking out, in which some of the greatest powers of Europe believed it their interest to engage, our hero thought proper to decamp from school, not sneakingly, but in the true spirit of martial ardour, with drums beating and colours flying. Equally regardless of the entreaties of his schoolmaster, or the admonition of an old priest, who was one of the teachers at the convent where the youth boarded ; and who had taken uncommon pains to instruct him in his duty to his fellow-creatures, as well as to that great omnipotent Being that created us all.

This poor well-meaning priest had but one foible, which unhappily distinguished

him from so many of his profession. In short, the silly man was weak enough to maintain that the authors, aiders, or abettors of any war but a defensive one, were the worst of all wicked sinners: and that whether they observed the fasts, or attended the ordinances of the church; joined in the responses, or chanted the praise of the holy Virgin, she nor her glorious Son would never acknowledge them, but as enemies to God's creatures; and whilst they continued of that bloody spirit, they were assuredly the children of wrath, and faithful servants of the Devil..

No wonder, therefore, our hero departed from such a dotard with so much indifference, as hath been already stated. Away, then, flew our young recruit, panting after fame, and eager to contribute his share to the glorious mischief, and honourable devastation of the ensuing campaign.

The person of our youth being tall for his age, although his countenance was by no means so prepossessing, the veteran commander of the recruiting party gave orders

for his immediate equipment—en militaire: Having thus commenced gentleman soldier, he marched to join the regiment to which his party belonged, and for the space of five days he bore the fatigues of the tramp with the fortitude of a veteran. But unfortunately for our hero's fame, the temptations that occurred on the sixth, being put in opposition to the hardships of marching upon a slender allowance, ease and good living got the better of all his glorious prospects of martial preferment, and he deserted about four o'clock in the morning of the sixth day.

After walking two leagues in a quite opposite direction to the route of the party he had just deserted, and having disguised himself by throwing away the most showy part of his military habiliments, he ventured to enter a village that lay in his way. He thereupon stepped into a cleanly cottage, where he told a most pitiable tale, which being natural enough to those who very fairly combined the wretched appearance of the narrator with his story, secured our young adventurer a safe and comfortable retreat for

the approaching night, together with plenty of the homely fare which composed their frugal meal.

The slumbers of our adventurer being no way disturbed by any obtrusive cogitations respecting either his present situation, or the means of future subsistence, he therefore did not trouble himself to rise till the hospitable family were about to sit down to their breakfast of lentil porridge and black bread; and upon his appearance, a place was kindly allotted to him at the rustic board. Where the remainder of the story of his hard fate was received as more than an equivalent for the consumption he had occasioned in the poor people's stock of provisions.

After thanking his hospitable entertainers in the most sincere language he had for a long time been accustomed to use, he left the friendly cottage, undetermined which path to take, and perfectly indifferent to every contingency that might occur, save one, that of falling into the hands of the recruiting party from whom he had so re-

cently made a fortunate escape: And now having completely lost sight of the cottage, after a long walk, he arrived at the borders of a very extensive forest; where stopping for an instant to consider whether it were better to explore his way through, or attempt to make a circuit of its boundaries. During this momentary suspension, his fears were alarmed by the sound of human voices at some distance; which circumstance at once determined him to enter the thickest part of the forest, where he could with great difficulty proceed scarcely more than a dozen yards in any straight direction; owing principally to the quantities of brushwood which impeded his progress, and his complete ignorance of any certain way that led towards a path.

Thus alarmed and bewildered, he endeavoured, after many a fruitless effort, to regain an opening; but in this hopeless attempt he was also foiled; and after several hours spent in unavailing trials, he found himself so overcome by weariness and fear, as to be obliged to lie down at the foot of a large tree; where an old intruder was the

first to put him in mind of his inability to answer one of those calls he had hitherto been accustomed to obey with the greatest cheerfulness. In short, hunger to him, even in idea, had ever appeared in the most frightful and hideous forms, but never till now had its effects been so direfully terrific. The place where it now haunted his disordered senses, was the least likely to afford even a glimpse of hope ; and the idea of night, whose sable approaches were now advancing so rapidly, would have been sufficiently powerful to damp any such hope in a more sanguine and resolute heart than our young traveller's. Thus situated, the last refuge of those who have only imbibed the mere forms of a religious education, appeared now to afford our hero some trivial consolation ; and for the first time in his existence did he, from the inmost recesses of a wearied heart, not only implore the blessing of the holy Virgin; but of all the saints he had ever heard the good old priest name; and as he has since frequently declared, he thought that hunger and fear were the best assistants of a bad memory,

and the most effectual stimulus to unequal vocal devotion.

After several ejaculations, as loud as they were pious, the sound of human voices once more assailed his welcome ears : for whether the effect of hunger, or of fear and prayer, or perhaps a combination of all, wrought the alteration, he could never exactly determine to this hour. But certain it is, that the fear of the same voices which had in the course of the day, and at some distance, hurried him into his present dilemma in the forest—we say the same voices, when much nearer, and at the dismal close of the day, had now produced a contrary effect.

Without stopping to investigate this apparent difficulty, we shall proceed to inform our readers, that the pious and audible ejaculations of our hungry penitent had alarmed a set of honest gentlemen, who have been stiled for many ages in that part of Germany, as well as elsewhere, Banditti. From the known circumstance of their com-

mitting various depredations, which may be classed under the general term of marauding, without any commission from those, whom long custom has supposed to be alone competent to grant such licences, and whose sole province it therefore unquestionably is.

Now it happened at this very time, that a party of those who were legally commissioned gentlemen marauders, had just two days before very deliberately plundered a village about a league and a half east of the forest, and by the way of amusement, not very uncommon with them, set fire to it. The smoking remains of which the non-commissioned banditti, first mentioned, had passed through early in the morning: and were now lying perdu in wait, in the forest, for the illustrious heroes that had achieved this great military feat. Nor should it be forgotten, for the sake of truth, that another motive in addition to that which must first strike the reader, had a considerable operation upon the banditti; although, indeed, plunder was the general, if not constant creed of the whole gang; yet, besides

this, love, all-powerful love, had a more than equal share in their earnest desire of revenge.

Know then, attentive reader, that the captain of the said banditti had felt all the effects of the little blind deity, and that in the neighbourhood of the before-mentioned village his darling mistress resided previous to the late disastrous outrage, blessed with plenty, and the impassioned addresses of a commander no way inferior in courage, abilities, or personal comeliness to the most renowned captains in history. But on the approach of the aforesaid licensed marauders, this second Helen had been, not like her fair prototype, first won by the fond assiduity of persevering love, but on the contrary, was forcibly violated by the chief of the said party, and then carried off in all the delirium of insulted constancy and virtue..

Although it may appear somewhat strange to the inexperienced reader, that any thing like a sentiment of honour should find a place in the breast of an unlicensed plun-

derer; without stopping to explain the hidden sources of cause and effect upon this occasion, we may be permitted to assure them, that there is nothing more common from one end of the globe to the other. From the plundering Arab of the desert, to the lineal descendants of that immortal hero of our own darling clime, the renowned Turpin; or the no less celebrated Hawke of gallant memory.

Thus, then, it turned out, that upon the arrival of the captain of the banditti, at the scene of devastation, already mentioned, whenever he understood by whom he had been wronged, he that instant, in all the wildness and enthusiasm of grief and rage, uttered the most dreadful imprecations upon himself, and all with him concerned; if he did not avenge the cause of her he loved, at the expence of the last drop of blood that circulated in his boiling veins. And the whole of his gallant party, whom he had often led to victory and wealth, joined in the solemn appeal, never to forsake their chief, till the end and measure of his vengeance should be complete.

Having thus ratified their concurrence in his cause, they instantly concluded upon the most effectual mode of arresting the flight, and cutting off the retreat of their sanguinary foe; and for that purpose had as soon as possible invested the forest, stationing the proper centinels at their various posts. For from the situation of the forest, it being in the centre of a vast plain, several leagues from any camp or village, except that which was just destroyed; there was no possibility of the destroyers taking any route without being discovered by their vigilant enemies.

It was the main body of this gang, consisting of thirty-five determined veterans, that alarmed, and afterwards detected our young adventurer, in the act of imploring heaven in behalf of his empty stomach, and for protection from the beasts of the forest during the darkness and uncertainty of the night.

The instant our hero beheld the approach of four or five armed men with

*torches in their hands, and masked, he exclaimed—"For the love of the blessed Virgin and the holy communion of saints, have pity upon a poor unfortunate youth, destitute of all means to injure, and who is starving with hunger and fainting with fatigue." This well-timed appeal even to the feelings of men accustomed to the rough and sanguinary trade of toil and death, was not without its proper effect; and scorning to bind a starving solitary youth, they forthwith conducted him to their chief, who had just before retired to his tent, which was of simple structure, and as quickly erected as struck.

After the party had related in what manner they surprised the youth, and presented the trembling prisoner to their captain, whose disposition was naturally generous and humane, they were instantly struck with the sudden alteration of his countenance. When after viewing the captive in a silent transport of indignation for a few seconds, he drew a pistol from his girdle, and seizing the trembling victim with the other hand by the collar, was

just upon the point of ending all the future prospects of our hero. When in one of those sudden emotions to which all great minds are subject, he disdainfully spurned the poor wretch from him, and indignantly placing the weapon of death again in his girdle, observed, "That, a beardless boy was too ignoble a sacrifice for the soul of Kruitzer, or his wrongs," and with a stern look of absolute command, desired them to strip from the person of our hero those offensive habiliments of the detestable regiment of —, whose late act of barbarity had disgraced the honourable profession of arms, lest he should in some dire moment of phrenzy strip the flesh from the bones of the wearer in his frantic gripe, with that of the uniform that was so very obnoxious to his sight.

The cause of this sudden transport of rage in a chief so far-famed as Kruitzer, and to an object so unworthy of a great man's anger, the sagacious reader has, without doubt, ere now developed; namely, the misfortune our adventurer had of being enlisted and wearing a part of the uniform

of that heroic corps, who had so much distinguished themselves in the destruction of the village, and the rape of captain Kruitzer's mistress*.

* Lest the burning of this village, &c. should be considered as singularly cruel, or as an unfounded reflection upon German troops, who are looked upon by all persons conversant with military tactics ; it may be necessary to remind our readers of one instance among too many others which stain the pages of history, and are some of the glorious consequences of war : namely, the memorable siege of Magdeburg, in 1631, by that distinguished hero General Count Tilly. The horrors attending which are too dreadful to relate, but was called by the hero that achieved it, "the marriage feast of Magdeburg."

CHAP. III.

OUR ADVENTURER UNDERGOES AN EXAMINATION BEFORE THE CAPTAIN AND HIS BANDITTI, TOUCHING THE DESTRUCTION OF THE VILLAGE—HE IS ACQUITTED, AND JOINS THE PARTY—A VIOLENT STORM, AND THE DISCOVERY OF THEIR ENEMIES.—A DREADFUL BATTLE ENSUES.

AFTER a short interval, however, the transports of the injured chief's rage began to subside, and he found himself at length sufficiently calm to interrogate the prisoner, whom they had by this time divested of every garment that bore any resemblance to that which had excited such terrible animosity in a breast where a considerable share of humanity lay stifled up in a benevolent corner, as it were, by the habits of his profession. He now proceeded to put such questions as he thought fit to the fugitive, accompanied with promises of protection and

reward if he concealed nothing of the truth ; and denounced the most terrible vengeance in case of any denial or evasion.

Notwithstanding the agitation of our young adventurer, occasioned by the former conduct of the captain, his story, and all its circumstances, when maturely weighed by the chief and his men, appeared so artless and probable, that our hero was acquitted of being a participator in the aforesaid military exploit, by the unanimous voice of the party. In consequence of this decision, our adventurer was questioned as to his present intentions, and in what manner he proposed to employ his future days. At the same time, several hints were thrown out in favour of marauding, some of which were no small reflection on the regular art of war, and contained severe invectives also on the distribution of justice amongst the rulers of the earth; which are too remote from truth to deserve a place here. Few persuasions are necessary to convince a man who is destitute of the means of subsistence to embrace a profession that is cer-

tain of affording immediate relief to his wants. This being exactly the case with our young adventurer, who, although not the most disposed to embark in any service of danger while there was the least probability of living without it, lost no time in convincing his new associates how willingly he embraced the honourable profession of arms: unfettered with that coercive discipline so very ungracious to the feelings of all young recruits in the regular systematic way. And at the same time begged to be put in a condition of annoying their common enemy as soon as possible; giving them plainly to understand that his ability to harrass the foe would be considerably increased by a hearty meal, of which he stood in the greatest need.

His demand was instantly complied with, and he soon convinced them of the reality of his want of food by the goodness of his appetite. Scarcely had our novice dispatched what was set before him, and had washed it down with two good bumpers of Rhenish wine, to the health

of their gallant leader, and the general success of the profession, than a most tremendous storm began to roar through the forest, and its increasing fury soon threatened to tear up the largest trees by the roots. The forked lightning now darting its destructive flashes in every direction, while the no very distant thunder that accompanied it, with each terrific clap, seemed to shake the globe to its very centre.—And to increase the gloominess of the intervals between each dreadful explosion of the sulphureous clouds, whole torrents of rain which came pouring down, seemed for a while to threaten a second deluge.

The situation of our newly initiated hero is much easier to be imagined than described. The necessity there was of supporting himself during so trying a scene, with the appearance at least of courage, amongst a set of men, who in reality felt no more from this horrid contention of the elements than the temporary inconvenience of the sousing they had undergone. We say to be able to preserve some-

thing like a fellowship in this intrepid daring, reflected no small share of credit upon our adventurer, whose behaviour on the occasion was praised by the chief, who anguished considerable fame and laurels would ere long be won by their young brother in arms the very first opportunity.

Little, however, did any of the party imagine that opportunity was quite so near. The storm, which had lasted nearly an hour and a half with the utmost violence, began now gradually to subside, but the darkness of the night still concealed from their view the ravages and devastation it had spread around them. Care for the preservation of their arms and powder, a general trait truly characteristic of banditti, had engrossed all their thoughts during the storm, and now when it had ceased they were about to reap some of the advantages resulting from such a necessary precaution.

The intrepid Kruitzer had just done inspecting his own pistols, when a signal was given, by an uncommonly loud and

shrill whistle from one of the outposts, the meaning of which our novice alone remained ignorant of, and that but for a short time. Being commanded to join in the quick step of his comrades, that led to certain victory, our hero, though provided with a case of pistols, a cutlass, and poignard, with a good musket and cartouch-box well supplied with ball-cartridge, equal to any of the party, felt something like compunction at the near approach of this same business of death. But resolving to put the best face upon the trembling occasion, and foreseeing the necessity of acting in conjunction, a motive that operates more generally than may be imagined, even amongst regular soldiers; we say our hero's penetration and philosophy determined him to submit to his fate with a good grace, since resistance could but accelerate his destruction.

The captain upon this, as most other occasions, did not consume much time in arranging his men, but just as they arrived at the borders of the forest, after a two hours' tedious march, only one abreast,

owing to the paths being so narrow; during which time a word had not been heard amongst the whole party, silence on those occasions being the invariable order, he formed them into a hollow square, placing himself in the centre. From which situation he told them, "That now their enemies were near, and the fortunate moment was arrived, so that they had nothing more to do the instant they appeared, but destroy them, no quarter to be given. And it would be a reflection on their former prowess if he attempted now to instruct them in the means. "One thing, however," said he, sternly, "I must repeat; our foes have degraded the name of men and soldiers, by their wanton cruelty, and are therefore unworthy of mercy. Destruction is therefore the word: —Advance, my brave comrades, and quickly execute it." So saying, he marched them silently on through an opening at the skirts of the forest, which led directly to the plain, near the margin of a small river. Where, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile, they could perceive the enemy's tents, three in number, by the fires they had by this time rekindled, and several of

them drying their clothes around the blazing piles.

Kruitzer had given orders to his men not to fire till within twenty yards of their foes, and but one quarter of them to do so at a time, that is, twelve to fire at once, for his scouts had now joined the main body, consisting in the whole of forty-eight men, and their intrepid leader. These orders were executed with the utmost promptitude and precision, and all those who were round the fire, fell either wounded or dead, at the first and second discharge. The remainder of the enemy's party, alarmed at this sudden attack, left their tents and endeavoured to form as quick as possible. But they had to contend with men not accustomed to forfeit any advantage gained by their superior conduct; and the consequence was, that a third and fourth volley, discharged at a much less distance than the former, considerably thinned the number of those who had thus left their tents; and the remainder coming to the assistance of their comrades, were now attacked by the whole body of Kruitzer's veterans with an

intrepidity bordering upon fury : where, and in the midst of the dreadful carnage that hereupon ensued, none seemed half so expert as the terrible death-dealing captain of this invincible banditti.

Thus far the surprise by which the robbers had gained so capital an advantage seemed to promise the most complete success ; but the unbridled fury that now appeared to have taken possession of their leader on this occasion, had nearly proved fatal to the whole party. For while they were in the act of destroying those, who in general being unarmed, and made little or no resistance, they were attacked by a party from the third tent, who had formed during the confusion and slaughter of their comrades at the other tents ; and now in their turn engaged the hitherto victorious desperadoes, who were by this time almost spent with the mere fatigue of destruction. So that as they were facing about to put an end to the last of their enemies, they were obstructed in their career by a well directed volley, which killed four of their bravest companions, and wounded ten others. This

advantage, however, was but short-lived, for the commander of the banditti gave the word for close quarters, and with the utmost bravery rushed forward into the thickest of his enemies, with sword and pistol, dealing death and wounds wherever he came. Nor were his endeavours feebly seconded by his brave companions, who fully acquitted themselves in the most gallant manner. Even our inexperienced adventurer, so powerful is the force of example, forgot his natural antipathy to danger, and on this occasion fully justified the prognostic of his veteran commander.

For nearly half an hour victory, however, seemed doubtful; the numbers of the regular warriors retarding the contest, and opposing an obstinate defence against the furious and repeated attacks of their desperate opponents. But when the advantage which these numbers gave them, became weakened by the continuance of the engagement, and the forces drew near to an equality, the decision, though more bloody, was also the more prompt, and the

banditti, as usual, were the conquerors.— But this victory, according to the captain's own account, was the dearest stake he had ever before won, having lost ten of his most courageous men, and more than twenty-six wounded. Amongst the latter was our adventurer, whose nasal pronunciation, so often remarked by our English nobility, was occasioned by one of the wounds he received in the said memorable engagement, having had the misfortune of his nose being beat flat, and the bridge broken by a blow with the butt end of a musket; to which circumstance, however, he owed, in all probability, his escape from the dreadful conflict already mentioned. For after the enemy's party, who had formed at the third tent, discharged their pieces, Kruitzer's men, as commanded, rushed forward, and closed with them before they could charge again; and in this duty our hero received the blow, as before related, which so completely stunned him, that he lay insensible during the remainder of this bloody engagement.

But as a further proof of his prowess, it

should not be omitted, that he received two bayonet wounds in the conflict, at the first tent; slight, indeed, but sufficient to prove that he had never turned his back to the enemy.

The approach of clear day-light now began to discover the extent of the carnage; and whilst those who had escaped unhurt were refreshing themselves in the tents of their enemies, after such hard duty, amongst the dying and the dead, their wary chief was preparing for his retreat in the bosom of the forest. Summoning his men, therefore, to his aid, who quickly disengaged every one of their enemies of what moveables of value they had about them, a few of the horses, which lately carried their foes, were now employed in removing every thing of use, tents, arms, &c. While some were busy in this employment, others were ordered to attend their wounded companions, and to remove as many as possible to their retreat in the forest, with as much ease to the sufferers as the nature of the service would permit. A certain number were also employed in burying their lamented

comrades; leaving the bodies of their enemies for the benefit of those winged military undertakers, called crows. But what pen can describe the emotions of the captain, whilst busily employed in the exercise of this duty, when he beheld in a corner of one of the tents his individual mistress, all trembling and pale, rising from amongst a group of dead and dying bodies that were covered with blood and wounds.

CHAP. IV.

THE EFFECTS OF THE DISCOVERY OF KRUITZER'S MISTRESS—HER REMOVAL TO THE FOREST—DESCRIPTION OF THE CAVERNS BELONGING TO THE BANDITI—DESPERATE CHARACTER OF THE CAPTAIN A MEANS OF HIS SAFETY—THE SECRECY OF THEIR RETREAT, AND THE MEANS RESORTED TO IN ORDER TO RECRUIT THEIR NUMBERS—IMPUNITY WITH WHICH THEY HAD SO LONG CONTINUED THEIR DEPREDATIONS; NOT MORE STRANGE THAN THE EXISTENCE OF OTHER WONDERS—CAPTAIN KRUITZER'S REFLECTIONS UPON THE BASTARDLY CONDUCT OF HIS CALUMNIATORS.

THE affecting scene that ensued upon the unexpected meeting of the captain and his mistress, as might naturally be expected,

was too much for the poor lady; and having gazed for a moment wildly around her, and surveyed the dreadful spectacle of her lover now before her with his sword reeking, she at length recognized the well-known features of her deliverer, and springing forward with a convulsive exertion towards him, she fainted away in his arms. As every moment now grew more precious, Kruitzer bore her to the open air, and very soon was happy enough to recover her sufficiently for the short distance they had to travel. In a little time she was removed to a place of perfect security in the forest, where she was committed to the care of a female domestic; and her lover, who was wounded in several places, though slightly, proceeded to collect his forces, and provide for their comfort and speedy recovery.

It may be necessary to inform the reader, that in this large forest, being no less than six German leagues in extent, there were several caverns, partly the work of nature and of art. The access to any of them was very difficult, and to some there was no

possibility of approaching on horseback. The extent and convenience of these caverns would to persons unacquainted with that country, appear rather doubtful, if not fabulous. The principal of these apparent caverns, where the lady was deposited, was formed by a very large party of smugglers, and other outlaws, who had long used it as a depot for themselves and their goods, in the following manner. About three miles from the north-east entrance of the forest, there was one irregular path, which divided at particular distances, and known only to the banditti and the smugglers, by whose art it was originally formed. At the final termination of this path was an oak tree of an amazing girth, and sufficiently conspicuous by its wide spreading branches, which extended over a vast chasm, the principle part of which was covered with ivy, brush-wood, and briars, so very thick and close as to prevent all possibility of an approach or passage in that direction.

Now this great chasm beneath all the aforesaid briars, brambles, &c. had been

cleared out at immense labour by the smugglers, and a roof thrown across from each side, by means of large branches of trees fit for that purpose. From the extremity of this roof to the bottom was more than thirty feet deep, forty wide, and the whole length from the entrance to the extent about two hundred feet. This space was divided into several apartments, a large stable, and many separate places to deposit the various articles of plunder belonging to its present possessors.

About sixty yards from this grand magazine was another subterraneous depot, different from the first in size, and being also partly the work of nature and the labour of art. Here their powder and ball were lodged, and in case of any sudden danger or extremity served them as a last retreat, being spacious enough to hold more than fifty men, and the approach to it admitting but of one person at a time, and that on foot.

In various places of the forest there were several smaller caverns than those already

described, all well supplied with ammunition, provision for themselves and horses, and various other necessaries. In short, this forest and its banditti had been the terror of all the surrounding country for more than an age, particularly upon the breaking out of a war upon the continent; and the deserters in small parties, from any of the contending powers, generally filled up the ranks of the banditti, whenever thinned by the sword or by sickness. The prisoners taken in their various engagements were also, upon occasion, very useful recruits; and the vigilance with which they were observed upon all occasions prevented any escape or discovery of their retreat, until such time as they had given sufficient proof of their fidelity. Therefore, the secrecy with which these hiding places had been above fifteen years concealed from the knowledge of their various pursuers, is not so very remarkable.

To one of the best apartments in the grand magazine the wounded robbers had been conveyed; and as several of them were only slightly hurt, they were appointed to

attend upon their comrades, and amongst the number of these attendants our young adventurer was soon admitted. The booty obtained in the last; and some former engagements, being rather considerable, and the danger of appearing too soon abroad; after an exploit that was likely to create so much alarm, determined the captain to lie by for some time ; and only taking the usual precaution of keeping a vigilant guard upon, and at the entrance of all the windings of the different paths, and these guards were relieved every two hours night and day.

Though to a person less cautious than the captain, these or any other rigid precautions for their safety might seem unnecessary, as the terror of the whole district was such, that no guide could be tempted by any price to conduct a traveller through this forest ; and the intrepid character of the captain and his followers was so well established, that few of the troops in the Elector's service, although amongst the bravest in the world, would volunteer upon such desperate duty.

Thus, from a combination of circumstances equally strange as hard of belief, like many other facts upon record, were those unlicenced plunderers enabled to levy contributions upon the whole neighbouring country, with as much impunity as the piratical states of that petty nest of marauders in Barbary have long continued to do upon all the great powers of Europe. We shall not insult the reader's understanding by a comparison of these apparent improbabilities, as the latter still continue to receive rich annual presents from the mighty sovereigns around them, to restrain their depredations, and spare their subjects; whilst the independent spirit of the brave Captain Kruitzer would have spurned at the idea of receiving any thing that could be construed by the enemies of his fame into so mean a condescension as that of accepting a bribe.

As the actions of this celebrated free-booter were in continual opposition to the laws of society, so were his precepts and all his reasoning; for so he called it, and none were bold enough to deny what he as-

ected; all tended to the same spirit of contradiction, mingled with the greatest contempt for the civil establishments of mankind. "They call me a lawless desperado," he would say, "equally regardless of, and deaf to the precepts of heaven and of man, and all my brave comrades are included in this calumny. But the dastards that so call us are secure enough from our contradiction and resentment when they utter such lying abuse; they well know the fallacy of such aspersions, and therefore want courage to defend them. It may be urged, indeed, that the truth or falsehood of any proposition can never be fairly decided by force; and therefore my threatening and calling them by such names as they justly merit is only recriminating for their cowardly abuse of me and my companions in arms. But I answer, that to force alone they are indebted for every thing; nay, further, we may assert that every injury sanctioned or permitted by their laws is upheld and maintained by force or power, which in all regular governments are synonymous terms. That in our case, force alone can decide who is or who is not a coward; and as they

have never dared to come to the issue fairly man to man against us, we have thus completely made good our assertion—namely, that the force of numbers constitute their power, and is the sole basis of their usurped authority.

“ But how have they attempted to prove us deserving of the abusive epithets they so liberally bestow upon us? Are we then indeed deaf to the voice of mercy, and ignorant of the laws of heaven? No, ye ermined hypocrites! it is you and other lazy drones who have never been directed by these sacred and immutable laws, and take every opportunity to pervert them. The laws of our bountiful Creator are those of simple nature, which every man throughout the universe, not an idiot in his faculties, sees and comprehends with delight, and stands in no need of a crafty pensioned interpreter to mutilate, garble, and distort them.

“ This clear and explicit law tells me, as a human being; that I have as much right to participate of the bounties of our common parent as any other animal that he

hath created; and the reason with which he hath endowed me tells me, what every season confirms by experience; namely, that there is more than tenfold abundance for us all! Who then shall presume to contradict these eternal truths? Why, a small number of the most worthless of the human race, who pretend to a sort of vague title left them by their predecessors, to enforce a code of partial and oppressive acts, mistakenly called laws, contrary to nature and justice, and in many cases sanguinary and absurd; and which many of these righteous dispensers have never been even at the trouble of framing or promulgating. If all this be true, my dear comrades! how grossly have they belied us, who are, by the operation of these very partial laws, compelled to revert to those of nature, to which alone all brave men since the creation have been obliged to resort from time to time, some in large parties, others in small: and when the larger party hath been crowned with success, they have frequently been silly enough to delegate, but never to resign up the very point they had been contending for into the hands of

a few of their equals ; who, grown giddy with the excess of power thus delegated, have generally used it for purposes that equally disgrace the oppressors, and those who tamely submitted to the oppression : and yet these very oppressors have found flatterers among the latter, who have exhausted the whole artillery of impious panegyric, in bestowing titles upon monsters which can alone belong to the great Author of Nature.

" On the contrary, those whom I had before observed, flying to their natural state in small bodies, being less fortunate than their fellow-men, were upbraided by the others ; insulted with the opprobrious terms of cut-throats, banditti, assassins, and the like ; and those who were loudest in their invectives happened to be these very flatterers who had abused the attributes and majesty of heaven itself, in bestowing them upon their oppressors, as in the other case. So that to fill up the measure of all the atrocious acts of this boasted society, these very men contended with each other, who should devise the most horrid tortures to

wreck the frame, and tear the hearts out of all those who henceforward should presume to take refuge in the natural state as we, my brave comrades, have done. But to make the farce as tragically ridiculous as possible, these same administrators of social laws have instituted mock trials; at the end of each of which, a grave ruffian in solemn masquerade pronounces sentence of death upon twenty, who are executed of a morning: for what think ye? why, probably for taking less than the tenth part of the value of a single sheep per man. Yet all this the execrable cold-blooded judge calls justice; and afterwards repairs to a sumptuous meal, the unnecessary luxury of which costs as much as would have kept twenty other starving wretches from a similar fate the next sessions.

“ Such, my brave fellows, is the history of all laws, generally speaking, throughout the civilized world, as it is falsely called: laws, every one of which have been originally framed by and for the rich, to subject the poor to their immediate disposal, or to oppress and often destroy them, as their

passions and their very caprice shall direct."

This is a faithful specimen of the general topics Kruitzer used frequently to entertain his followers with, during their recess and seclusion from duty; and no man was ever heard with more evident signs of marked attention, such was the infatuation of his followers. But it must be confessed, that other motives inclined them to that implicit acquiescence than the mere force of his elocution, although lofty and commanding enough; namely, the general conformity of his actions with the precepts he inculcated, however fallacious these precepts. For no man could be more disinterestedly just in the division of spoil, in the participation of their dangers, or their toils, than him who thus spoke; none more humane and generous, even to an enemy, after a battle, except in the instance of the late bloody contest, where strong natural motives operated against that clemency, which never in any other instance was known to forsake him.

CHAP. V.

THE ATTENTION PAID BY KRUITZER'S MISTRESS, THE FAIR CATHERINE, TO THE WOUNDED LIEUTENANT IS PRODUCTIVE OF AN AMOUR, THE COMPLETION OF WHICH IS PREVENTED BY THE JEALOUSY OF KRUITZER—HE FORMS A PLAN TO GET RID OF HIS MISTRESS AND HER RAMOUR—ACCUSES HIM OF TREACHERY ---OUR YOUNG CHEVALIER GIVES EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM—THE LIEUTENANT IS CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO BE SHOT—ESCAPES IN THE DISGUISE OF THE CAPTAIN'S MISTRESS, THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF THAT COMMANDER.

OUR young adventurer had now tarried with the free-booters about a month, every day of which their mode of life became less irksome to him; and in that space five more of their number were cut off in conse-

quence of their wounds received in the late engagement; when a circumstance occurred that restored him at length to the light of the sun once more. Soon after the battle, our readers will recollect, we left the captain's mistress, the fair Catherine, under the care of the only female domestic about the grand magazine. To this old faithful creature, whose name was Martha, Catherine was known as the favourite of her kind master. Under this attentive servant the lady soon recovered from the situation her fears, and the recollection of past horrors, had reduced her; and the tenderness of her lover, added to the care of Martha, soon reconciled her to this mode of temporary seclusion.

This fair lady being of a very amiable disposition, her humanity, sanctioned by the captain's approbation, prompted her to visit the sick once or twice a day, who were greatly benefited by her humane attendance. Amongst the number, there was one, who in general was looked up to as second in command, a great favourite with Kruitzer, and in whose prudence and cou-

rage he had the utmost confidence. And as he had been often employed upon affairs that required a considerable share of both, and always acquitted himself to the satisfaction of the whole party, it is no wonder they were particularly anxious for his recovery as well as their chief. But none seemed more assiduous in contributing towards that desirable end than the handsome Catherine; and it was very obvious, that her humane attentions were extremely agreeable to her enamoured patient. In short, he appeared to recover more from the frequent visits of his kind doctress than from the cordials that were occasionally administered to him. As our young chevalier's situation was near the amorous lieutenant's, he had frequent opportunities of seeing and overhearing what passed between the patient and his fair doctress, when they least imagined they were observed.

Whether the suspicions of the faithful Martha, or those of our hero, were first communicated to the captain, is not material; the fact however was, that in a very

short time he grew completely jealous. And the effects of that distemper of the jaundiced mind became hourly more visible to every person but those whom it most intimately concerned. Our hero's wounds being now completely cured, the captain frequently honoured him with a walk in the forest, where, after repeatedly sounding him, he considered him as ripe for his purpose, and was highly satisfied with the readiness of his wit, the promptness of his answers, and, above all, the strong appearance of attachment and gratitude he saw in him.

In short, Kruitzer very soon confided the secret of his torment to the youth, as also the plan he had resolved upon, now his lieutenant was able to perform regular duty. Accordingly he summoned all his surviving companions, with a view of imparting to them the scheme of some new expedition, the principal parts of which, as usual, he was to disclose at a fit opportunity. Matters being thus adjusted, the customary sentinels were appointed, six in number, to guard the avenues leading to

their depot of ammunition, and the lieutenant was entrusted with the superintending care of them, the magazine, and the captain's mistress, the fair Catherine.

It may easily be conceived how pleasing the latter piece of duty must have been to the amorous lieutenant; and the alacrity with which he agreed to remain behind, contrary to all former practice, convinced his commander that his suspicions were but too well founded. But as nothing criminal had yet taken place, he was determined to afford an opportunity, which should confirm all he dreaded, or for ever lull the suspected offence in profound oblivion. Having given Martha proper instructions, and left our hero behind, as a faithful auxiliary spy upon the actions of the fond pair, the veteran commander and his intrepid followers proceeded on their expedition, well mounted and armed, to the number of thirty. They at a certain distance from the forest dispersed, each taking the way as previously directed, till they joined the general rendezvous ~~at~~ night, which was some leagues distant from the forest, near the en-

virons of a village, where our commander and his party were more beloved than feared..

After reconnoitering for several leagues, the whole party, one by one, repaired to the head-quarters, near the village aforesaid, where good store of refreshment was ready provided. Having partook of this good cheer in moderation, the heads of a plan to surprise a nobleman's chatteau in the vicinity of their present quarters was submitted to them, and the most probable means proposed to carry that design into execution. But when they came to load their arms, to their utter surprise who first made the discovery, there was not a flint to be found in either carbine or pistol; and upon a general examination, all the rest were perceived to be in the same predicament. Upon this discovery, which so equally interested the whole, nothing but the utmost consternation seemed for a while to prevail. Nor could any individual present be particularly suspected, as the personal safety of each was endangered alike by the act. At length the commander hinted some suspi-

cions of the lieutenant, and enforced them by remarking with how much cheerfulness he staid behind, contrary to all his former usage. This hint was more than sufficient; and, coming from such authority, their former favourite was doomed, without further proof, to immediate destruction.

This, however, was neither agreeable to the whole tenor of their captain's justice, nor consistent with his intended plan of operation. He therefore requested their forbearance, until he should have an opportunity of convicting him upon the fullest evidence: and accordingly he proposed returning with five or six of the party appointed for the purpose of surprising the lieutenant. This plan being instantly adopted, they set off for the magazine, where, having arrived, the lieutenant was secured and confined immediately, and a guard set over him, till his comrades should decide upon his case; the captain refusing to see or hear him, till the sense of a council of war should be taken, and the just tribunal of a court-martial should determine upon his fate.

In the interim, the captain sent for his mistress, and the two spies he had set upon her conduct, and having them all before him, he locked the door of the apartment, and in the bitterest terms reproached the ingratitude of the guilty fair one and her paramour; and upon her denying the charge, backed by the sometimes irresistible dumb eloquence of a flood of tears, he began to confront her with the witnesses. The result of their evidence fully convinced the captain, that if he was not yet injured in the tenderest point, to the full extent of his mistress's infidelity, he was more beholden to her want of opportunity, than to any deficiency of her inclination.

Upon this sudden and unexpected detection, the confounded and disconsolate lady began to avail herself of those arts which the sex can so often practise with success upon their jealous tyrants: and all that tears, sighs, and humble prostration doth usually effect, were tried upon the stern mind of the inflexible Kruitzer; but, alas, they were all tried in vain! So that, with-

out regarding the lovely kneeling petitioner—his once dear, and now lovely weeping Catherine—he spurned her from him with the most mortifying contempt; and then immediately ordered her into close confinement: which order was carried into execution by the two witnesses who had deposed against her.

He next called a council of war together, consisting of twenty-four of the most approved persons that composed this equitable gang; from which number, one half was appointed by lot, to examine and fairly try the matter at issue: and they met accordingly to deliberate, with as much gravity as any twelve of their betters, who, although legally appointed, too often decide as the judge directs, without any previous consultation of their own understanding. Not so our deliberating jury: accustomed as they were to every species of injustice against the community at large, yet amongst themselves they were never known to dispense with that maxim, which is said universally to prevail amongst their fraternity, to the disgrace of many others; name-

ly—"That honour should ever be preserved between thieves."

After the captain, as president of this court-martial, had opened the business in a very candid speech, the prisoner was ordered to stand forward, and attend to the charge against him, and the evidence that should appear in support of it, to whom he might put such questions as he thought proper. This being premised, the charge was read aloud, accusing the poor lieutenant of the foulest treachery to his comrades, in taking the flints from their arms, previous to their going upon actual duty: —a crime of so black a die, as never to be forgiven in this world by any truly brave free-booter, at the foot of the fatal tree, even at the risk of never being forgiven himself hereafter.

In support of this dreadful charge, our hero the chevalier was the principal witness; but there was a very strong circumstance against him also, which would have been sufficient to convict a man before a less immaculate tribunal; namely, the ge-

nerally known fact of the prisoner's being the only person to whose care the depot of arms was ever entrusted, and whose peculiar duty it was to superintend that important service. Whether the ungrateful conduct of the prisoner towards his preserver and benefactor, a sense of which might strike him with remorse, and thus deprive him of his usual address, when his eyes encountered those of his injured commander, being placed over against the seat of justice; or that he was confounded with a charge as unexpected as it was groundless: whatever, therefore, was the cause, his defence was confused; and the evident trepidation under which he delivered it, convinced all the veterans present, but the judge and out hero, of his undoubted guilt.

The verdict, therefore, of the court was unanimous, and the culprit was sentenced to be shot; which sentence was to be executed in two days after his conviction, the whole of his comrades being to draw lots for the dreadful office of finishing him like a soldier.

During the melancholy interval, the captain secluded himself from all society, and gave a loose to the most poignant distress; torn by contending passions—love, jealousy, friendship, and revenge: not that he had the most distant idea of permitting the sentence of death to be carried into execution; but in reflecting, that in every thing he thought worth living for, he had been deceived. His temper of mind, however, was too masculine to sink under the force of any impression;—he could bend, but his soul scorned to shrink from any trial, however severe: and another motive for immediate exertion, was the shortness of the period between his once-loved friend and eternity. For notwithstanding his authority was as absolute as that of any other despot in the universe, he was too good a politician ever to exert or enforce it in serious matters, where the interest of his companions was concerned, as long as there was a possibility of accomplishing his ends, by stratagem, or any other means.

Agreeably to this principle, his fruitful brain quickly presented an expedient that

could not fail of success. He accordingly, about the middle of the night preceding the fatal morning of execution, proceeded to the prison of his mistress, and desiring to be heard without any interruption, informed her briefly of her paramour's situation, and of the only means left in her, or in his power of saving his life. The uncommon generosity of this act so completely overcame the guilty fair one, guilty only indeed in imagination, that she vowed eternal attachment; declaring in the most solemn manner, that her inconstancy had never proceeded beyond the crime of thought, and imprecating heaven to shower down its vengeance if she ever should submit to accompany her paramour, which was part of the captain's proposal; but that in strict conformity to his will she would exchange clothes with him, and abide the consequence.. To these conditions the captain was obliged reluctantly to submit, he immediately gave her an order to the sentinels who guarded her lover's prison door, to be admitted for an hour to converse with the prisoner, without interruption. Thither she accordingly repaired

in deep mourning, and a long black veil over her face; and having shewn the captain's order, was immediately admitted.

The interview was as unexpected as it was tender upon the prisoner's side, but the lady soon convinced him that no time was to be lost now in explanation, or idle conversation, and therefore commanded him to prepare, in her apparel, to escape the death that so shortly awaited him. To this proposal he bravely objected, upon the score of his dread of her immediate destruction, as soon as the discovery would be made. But she with much difficulty allayed those fears, by asserting the complete dominion she possessed over the captain, which the lieutenant well knew; and accordingly began to apparel himself in Catherine's clothes, which with her assistance he was enabled to do, being rather too lusty, though about her own stature. All things being thus in readiness, he tapped at the door and was let out by the sentinels, who locked it again upon their supposed prisoner, without the least suspicion.

The lieutenant, in his female disguise, proceeded through the passage, till he arrived at the stable; when, according to instructions, he made the signal, and five of the gang immediately appeared, each leading his horse, and one ready saddled for the lady, whom they helped to mount, without speaking a word. In the same profound silence they passed through the forest, and continued their route for about three hours at a round pace; when they arrived at the place of rendezvous soon after day-light, where the party had assembled a few nights before, for the purpose of attacking a nobleman's chateau, as before related. Here, one of the gang assisted the lady to dismount, and delivered her a small leather bag, pretty weighty, and leaving her with the hostess, to whom he presented a letter, turned his horse's head and set off full speed towards the forest, followed by his comrades.

Immediately after their departure, our hostess having provided the necessary refreshments for the fair fugitive, began to inveigh bitterly against the fickleness of

the other sex, and threw out several ill-natured reflexions against the captain, for thus dismissing so fine a woman, of whom she had heard so much, but never before had seen. The lieutenant was not a little pleased to find his disguise equal to the test of female penetration, even by daylight, and therefore began to indulge the hope of escaping, through the passion and address of his mistress; not doubting but that he should be soon blessed with her engaging company, when he should be enabled to make her every return in his power; for such an unparalleled proof of her tender passion.

Franght with these delightful prospects of future bliss, he became less eager to be gone, than he at first appeared, till the thoughts of the dilemma, in which his mistress was left, began to obtrude upon his generous mind; for, independent of love, no other consideration on earth could have induced him to desert his commander. From these and other cogitations, the landlady roused him effectually, by producing a suit of rustic apparel, in which

disguise, she said, her instructions from captain Kruitzer were, that she should instantly make her escape to Frankfort on the Mayne. At the same time, the good woman declared her sorrow for these orders; knowing, as she said, it was only to shab her off, for some new-fangled choice. But as her every thing, life and all, were dependent on the captain, he must be obliged, and therefore obeyed at all events.

These injunctions were seconded by the lieutenant, who was still more convinced of his mistress's address being evident in all this, and therefore professed his readiness to follow the landlady's instructions to a tittle. Preparing, therefore, to disengage himself from his female disguise, the good-natured hostess would fain have assisted, but the other declined her kind offices, which would have been forced, had not a messenger, fortunately for our lieutenant, whispered her out. Her absence was improved by the masculine lady, who had not a minute to lose; for he had scarcely done dressing, when the good woman returned pale, and almost breathless, bidding her,

for the love of the Virgin, gather up her woman's clothes, and give them to her; which being done, she rolled them up in her apron, and ran across the yard to an out-house, where she deposited them, and immediately returned to our lieutenant, now disguised as a peasant. Telling him to take a spade, and put on an old hat, which she brought, and directly proceed to a field she pointed out, where some men were at work, and to do as he saw the rest, till she had an opportunity of further explanation.

Our new labourer proceeded directly to the place, and began his imitative operations. He had not been long in his new employment, when his attention was arrested by the sound of several voices; enquiring of the men in the field respecting a lady they were in pursuit of. Having surveyed the enquiring party, our peasant in disguise, not being able to recollect any of their persons, very indifferently recommenced the labour of the spade after having seen the party cross the country at full speed. He now began to deliberate whether he had not better return to the Inn, than remain at his post till the arrival of his hostess, or some messen-

get from her, when he perceived a boy at a little distance making signs to him to follow, which he was not slow in obeying.

Having entered the room in the Inn where he changed his dress, the landlady soon joined him, and placing her hand on her lips, in token of silence, immediately withdrew, leaving our peasant in the utmost perplexity and suspense. She had not been absent many minutes, till hearing the noise of horses' feet, he rose from his seat, and without going near enough to the window to be perceived by those outside the house, he discovered two of the party he had seen in the field ride off in another direction, as fast as their horses could carry them. Immediately on their departure our hostess made her appearance, and began in her own circumstantial manner to develope the secret of all that had passed within the last three hours, since the arrival of the lady lieutenant, and which had given him so much uneasiness: but for brevity's sake we shall conclude in as few words as possible.

In fact, these horsemen were servants to

the Count Minsky, and were actually in pursuit of their lady, who had taken it into her head toelope from her husband, and to the eternal disgrace of the noble blood that once circulated in her veins, which she had for some time contaminated by a familiar and criminal intercourse with one of her footmen, under whose protection she had just taken farewell of her noble kindred husband, and all his pomp. Now as the disguise she had gone off in was exactly similar to that which Kruitzer's mistress had chosen to employ in the liberation of her suspected paramour, these same armed footmen, who were returning to their master with the heavy tidings of a fruitless search, were met by a friar, who had seen the disguised lieutenant pass; and having answered their enquiries by a description of her dress, they one and all declared this to be their lady. And dividing their forces, set off once more in pursuit of their fugitive mistress, and upon their return happened to take the road to the Inn, which had so scared the good hostess for the safety of her customer thus disguised.

Thus circumstanced, our peasant determined in his present disguise to consult his immediate safety in a precipitate retreat, which he effected as soon as night favoured his design, and arrived safe at Frankfort. Where, changing his peasant's dress for one more suitable to the rank of a gentleman, our lieutenant, possessing a very handsome person, and engaging manners, soon made a conquest of a rich tradesman's widow, whose dear departed husband had kindly left her all the pelf he had been long amassing. Which she most generously, along with her charming self, bestowed upon our fortunate lieutenant; who, in consequence of such an instance of good fortune, took the laudable and prudent resolution of becoming an honest man, in the strictest legal sense of the phrase.



CHAP. VI.

CONSTERNATION OF THE BANDITTI UPON
DISCOVERING THE ESCAPE OF THE LIEU-
TENANT—FEAR OF THE SENTINELS IN
CONSEQUENCE—THEIR ATTENTION IS
DIVERTED FROM THIS EVENT BY AN
ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN A PARTY OF
HULANS AND CROATS, AND SOME
PRUSSIAN TROOPS—THE HULANS ARE
VICTORIOUS—KRUITZER SEIZES THEIR
HORSES—A MOST BLOODY CONTEST
ENSUES BETWEEN THEM—THE BRAVE
KRUITZER DESPERATELY WOUNDED IN
THE ENGAGEMENT—IS ASSISTED BY
THE CHEVALIER—HIS ATTENTION TO HIS
COMMANDER—THE FOUNDATION OF HIS
FUTURE FORTUNE—THE DEATH OF THE
INVINCIBLE KRUITZER—DISPERSION OF
THE GANG—KINDNESS AND PROBITY OF
FATHER BERNARD—CATHERINE RETIRES
TO A CONVENT—THE CHEVALIER IS
QUALIFIED FOR THE PROFESSION OF
PICTURECRAFT.

WE have now to relate the very different fortune that attended the remainder of

this renowned gang; we crave pardon of the military heroes of past and present times, for joining two such adverse terms as renown and gang; but really fortune hath so ordered it, that this illegal phalanx should, beyond all doubt, and contrary to all usages, obtain such a distinction in story. And while we lament the prostitution of an adjective so truly sublime, as the word renowned, we must, as faithful historians, record the fact. Well then, the exit and dispersion of the remainder of the said veteran phalanx, though it cannot justify the abuse of so pompous a term as renowned, will nevertheless give our readers some idea from another term, so generally applied to men of their description, when taking leave of the world under a piece of timber placed in a horizontal direction, supported by two uprights of the same materials. We say, the malicious, have through this wooden structure for ages applied the term—"ignominious," to all those who have been fated to bid adieu to their friends beneath its choking influence.

But waving all further metaphor and simile, we shall conduct our readers back to the

magazine, after the escape of our newly made convert to honesty, mentioned at the end of our last Chapter. It will be recollected upon that occasion, Kruitzer had a double part to act, the first of which we have related his success in, and the other it is now our task to record. The consternation of the whole gang on the morning of the fatal execution, who repaired to the prison, to take a final leave of a brave comrade, beggars all description; but that of the two sentinels who guarded the prison, was mixed with a degree of terrific surprise, never equalled by any actors, or upon any theatre, but that of real nature.

In short, the captain, who, as before stated, was the chief, and principal character in the piece, had just sallied forth, appalled in the usual emblems of well-affected woe, when the necessity of appearing in his real profession approached nearer every instant. He had no sooner reached the prison door, where the principal scene of consternation lay, than a discharge of musquetry was distinctly heard by the whole

party. And before any of them could be dispatched to enquire the cause, the sentinels from their various posts about the forest came panting in with the unwelcome tidings of a too formidable enemy's approach. The captain issued immediate orders, in consequence of this alarm, to delay the execution, and gave the word to arms, and each man repaired to the depot forthwith. Being quickly joined in the forest by his men, completely armed at all points, the discharge of small arms became quite frequent, and seemed to approach nearer their position every moment.

Kruitzer advised his people to await the issue of this action on foot, and to avail themselves of their knowledge of the forest as an advantage peculiarly their own. And as they were all excellent marksmen, he did not doubt of their being equal to cope with four times their own number of any description of enemies. Thus prepared, they waited the approach of their foes ; for, be them Prussians, Hungarians, Hulans, or Croats, all parties were alike the enemies of Kruitzer, because he levied contributions

upon them indiscriminately, despising every thing like silly partiality ; and acknowledging no superiority of nation or commander, equally regardless of the laws of war, as those of nations.

They had not waited more than two hours in this suspense, until they were entertained with a nearer view of the contest than was consistent with their safety ; several musket balls having whizzed through the air, near the spot which they occupied. Presently after, a large party of armed men in motley uniform retreated to the forest, and there spread themselves in various directions, while our banditti, who considered themselves as the real proprietors of it, lay down in ambush to mark the issue of the contest. And now the pursuing party approached at full speed to the entrance of the forest, from whence they received a smart volley from those who first gained that position, which brought several horses with their riders to the ground. The remainder instantly dismounted and drove their enemies before them, sabre in hand, who thereupon fled in small detachments,

each seeming anxious only for his own preservation.

In this situation of affairs, there was no time to be lost, and Kruitzer marched with a quick step, his men following, till he led them by a circuitous route, silent as the grave, into the plain, within a hundred paces of where the horses of the pursuing party stood, with about ten soldiers to look after them. Capt. Kruitzer now gave the word, and advancing to the attack, desired his men only to present their carabines, without firing, and if possible to take the guard prisoners. They accordingly pushed forward, commanding the soldiers to surrender upon pain of immediate death. This imperious summons was directly answered by the adverse party with a discharge of their carabines, which wounded several of the banditti, the remainder of whom rushed upon the imprudent and savage Hulans and dispatched every one of them. Kraitzer lost no longer time than his men were rifling their enemies, which was very soon accomplished, and the prize proved scarcely worth their trouble; as they had not been long enough in the

imperial service to collect much booty, that being all the pay of either Hulans or Croats. The banditti then mounted their enemies' horses, each man leading as many as he could besides, with all the expedition possible, by the same route they came; and sending their wounded companions forward, the remainder proceeded in as close order as the nature of the pathways would admit. In this manner they continued their march till within a quarter of a mile of the grand magazine, when they perceived the enemy posted in every direction to dispute their passing.

Kruitzer, whose presence of mind upon these occasions never deserted him for a moment, ordered his men to dismount, and each to place himself so as to present the side of his horse to the enemy, and thus receive their fire. The celerity of this unexpected movement delayed for a moment the enemy's fire, who perceiving there was no reaching their foes in that way, but through the sides of their own horses, instantly came to the determination of attacking them with their sabres. They

therefore threw down their carabines, and being three times the number of their opponents, they rushed forward, confident of success. The banditti, as ordered, never fired till their enemies were within something less than pistol shot, and as their carabines were more like blunderbusses than any thing else, and loaded with grape and slugs, the execution they did was in proportion. The conflict now, therefore, became extremely bloody; for as the Hulans approached nearer, they had to sustain the fire of forty brace of their enemies' pistols, which did considerable execution; and when those, who had survived the fire, began the attack with their sabres, many of them were knocked on the head with the butt end of the carabines of the banditti.

In this dreadful dilemma they attempted to regain their muskets, which they so rashly had abandoned in the beginning of the contest; but the wounded party, who had returned from the magazine, upon hearing the firing, took care to remove all the arms they could not use in the early part of the engagement, and with the remainder

they galled their enemies with a severe and well-directed fire from behind the trees which concealed them from their foes. The battle had now raged for more than two hours, for the Hulans fought desperately, when the brave Kruitzer, who had dispatched more than seven of the enemy with his own hand, received a wound in his left arm, which nearly severed it from his body. And here it was that our hero, the Chevalier Vanderwigtie, laid the foundation of all his future fortune and knowledge in the fine arts. Being near his commander, and seeing him ready to faint with loss of blood, still wounding his enemies, as he retreated towards a group of his intrepid men, who were victorious; our hero perceiving him stagger, caught him in his arms, and bore him more than twenty paces to a place where six of his men were charging their pistols, near a heap of their slaughtered foes: and just as he had laid the wounded commander gently down, he received a blow from a sabre, that would have finished his earthly career, but for a friendly branch of an oak that luckily interposed, through which the sabre de-

scended with impeded force upon our adventurer's head, where it left a mark time has not yet been able to efface. The blow, however, did not go unrevenged ; for the Hulan, who meant it for the almost expiring captain, was shot dead upon the spot by one of the gang, who now, according to the positive commands of their chief, flew to the assistance of their veteran comrades.

The wounded Kruitzer, seeing the fallen state of our adventurer and his preserver, endeavoured to assist him with his remaining arm ; but the youth, who had just recovered from the stunning blows, assured his captain, that it was a mere flesh wound, of no more consequence than a scratch ; and instantly stripping off his clothes, tore off his shirt, and, with great presence of mind, bound up the tottering arm of his gallant commander. At that moment, this invincible hero, perceiving two of his men bravely defending themselves against five of their enemies ; notwithstanding his being so weakened by the loss of blood, he sprung forward to the assistance of his comrades,

and in a instant dispatched two of their opponents with his poignard. But raising his arm to do the same kind office for a third, he received a pistol bullet in his right side, near the breast, which brought him to the ground ; and almost at the same moment our young chevalier stabbed the Hulan to the heart that discharged the fatal bullet.

By this time the robbers had reduced their enemies' number to thirty, several of whom were wounded, and they had lost in killed and missing more than half their companions ; when the commander of the Hulans, finding that no victory was to be obtained while a man of their opponents was left alive, gave the word to retreat, and they began to fly in all possible directions. But the diminished strength and number of the banditti rendering all pursuit impracticable, they suffered this miserable wreck of the Hulan force to escape their fury for the present. Their next care was now to render every assistance to those who stood most in need of it ; and their attention was naturally directed, first to their brave com-

mander, who lay senseless amongst a heap of his slaughtered enemies ; his features still exhibiting all the marks of intrepid resolution, and that stern dignified manliness for which he was so justly admired by his followers ; and still in his vigorous grasp remained the deadly destructive poignard, yet reeking with the gore of his opponents. In this state they bore him to the grand magazine, with very little hope of ever beholding another animating glance from his courageous eyes.

Our adventurer, however, was extremely active in procuring such life-recalling balsams and cordial remedies as upon such occasions were most resorted to by these hardy sons of rapine, and in which they had more than common faith as well as skill. After a number of these wonder-working specifics had been administered in vain, some of the gang dispatched a trusty messenger, one of their own body, to a neighbouring convent, to bring with all imaginable speed an old friar, not less famed for his skill in surgery than for his uncommon humanity. During a lapse of more than

an hour, the vital spark, which had nearly been extinguished, received a vivifying portion of aid from some of the many cordials already given; and when all hopes were nearly over, began to reanimate the lacerated trunk of the brave Kruitzer; who, lifting up his dying eyes, beheld around him the faithful remaining few of his trusty followers, in all the perils of his lawless life. He essayed in vain to speak. The hand of death was strong upon him, and had but delayed his final inevitable blow for purposes recorded only in the book of fate. The endeavours of his men were now redoubled, and the greatest anxiety might be traced in each truly sorrowful countenance that surrounded his couch, when the arrival of the good friar was announced, whose entrance was hailed by all present as a happy omén. Father Bernard, for such was his name, gently approached the dying hero; and after examining his wounds, pronounced that which was caused by the pistol to be mortal, much to the grief of all his faithful comrades. He then proceeded to administer a few drops from a phial he always brought with him on such occa-

sions, and its power was so effectual as to revive the patient, and in a few moments after he had swallowed it, to restore him to the use of his speech. The good friar then made signs for every one of his auditors to withdraw; which Kruitzer perceiving, begged pardon of the holy man, but insisted upon their staying by him to the last; for, but with his expiring breath only, would he resign the command of such truly, brave, and faithful men, even for a moment. He then, with a feeble voice, politely thanked Father Bernard, declaring his great sense of the goodness by which he was actuated; begged that he might attend those of his men, whose souls required such Christian consolation as no man was better qualified to administer; and therefore he besought him to discharge the duties of his function without delay, where his assistance could only be useful. The good friar would fain have replied, but a hint from the captain caused his men to lead the good father to the wounded and dying, where his pious offices were more acceptable. Kruitzer, now summoning all his strength, thus addressed his trusty as-

sociates ; "Comrades, and friends ! as the last fleeting hour of my existence amongst you is now wasting apace, and as there is not a moment of our lives that should be neglected, in which we can be serviceable to our friends, hear with attention the dying advice of your friend and fellow soldier"—. Here his voice becoming faint, our adventurer supplied him with a few spoonfulls of the cordial left by the good friar, and he thus proceeded ; "I have accumulated a very considerable sum through our common exertions in peril and danger of all kinds; besides plate, jewels, and other articles of value; to each and every one of you that may survive me, I bequeath an equal share of this general booty ; all the favour I ask in return is, that you will cheerfully include this youth, and the unfortunate woman who is now in confinement in your lieutenant's stead. When I am quietly interred, and not before, you will release her, and conduct her safely wherever she best likes to go. And as I would not be disturbed by the unavailing lamentations of female sorrow, however real, so neither would any thing add so bitter a pang to an

honourable death, justly becoming a brave man, as any display of weakness amongst you for my loss, or contentions about my successor. Live, my brave friends, to convince the silly prejudiced world, that true and unsullied honour can only reside with that courage which equally despises the power and the errors of all those societies founded on the rotten basis of fear and injustice." Here he paused a little, and then continued: "I now mean to convince you all by this my last act on the stage of a dangerous life, that as I have long triumphed over the power and arts of society; and all its restrictions and prejudices; that I am also capable of a more difficult task, that of vanquishing a very formidable internal enemy; namely, my own prejudices. And therefore, as I never felt the least occasion for a priest, nor ever placed any reliance on their profession in spiritual concerns, I do now empower and entrust Father Bernard with the carrying into effect this my last will; which may convince my enemies, that I thought an honest man may be found in all professions, not excepting even that of the church. Adieu, my friends, and may

you long be successful over those who have villainously, and like cowards, prescribed laws for the punishment of all those most contemptible dastards, who are base enough to submit to their execution." Here, with outstretched arms ready to embrace his friends, the utterance of the brave, the gallant Kruitzer, was stopped by that inexorable, but impartial executioner of the will of fate: And we verily believe that he would have shewn no more respect to the greatest monarch upon the earth than he did to the poor priest; and that even the eloquence of the immortal Tully himself would not have commanded his attention to the delivery of another syllable.

It is but justice to the candour and discernment of the defunct hero, for the holy profession requires not the feeble meed of human biography; their reward is too sublime for the records of perishable fame; we say, in acquainting our readers of the rigid punctuality of the good father, in fulfilling to a tittle the last will and testament of a commander of banditti, we assert that our illustrious robber has left us a strong

proof of his knowledge of human nature. Another instance among a hundred of the good rendered to society by the labours of Father Bernard, we are proud to relate; namely, that the unfortunate widowed mistress of the brave Kruitzer, the fair, the lovely Catherine, at her own earnest solicitation, found peace and consolation for the remainder of her days in a neighbouring monastery. And that all who survived their commander, and were not past future service, through the persuasions of the same pious friar, justly took up arms in defence of the liberty of their country against all invaders, under whatever pretext they might dare to appear.

Amongst others, our young chevalier, by the captain's bounty, was now enabled to provide for himself in any way most agreeable to his own inclination, he being now only in his eighteenth year; him also our good priest took uncommon pains to instruct, not only in the most rational way of spending his little fortune and time, but in that most important of all truths, "that a life of virtue can alone secure us perma-

nent tranquillity in this transitory abode, and an earnest of that sublime happiness prepared for such as walk in a virtuous path, in the heavenly mansions of eternal bliss."

With this worthy man our adventurer remained more than two years, and in that time considerably improved himself, not only in the most necessary branches of education, but particularly in the art of drawing, a knowledge of which he acquired principally under the auspices of this learned and valuable monk; and which has enabled him ever since to procure subsistence upon much safer terms, though perhaps not much more equitable, than those which the celebrated Kruitzer inculcated in him with his last breath, as shall be recorded hereafter.

CHAP. VII.

OUR ADVENTURER HAVING RECEIVED RECOMMENDATORY LETTERS FROM FATHER BERNARD, DÉPARTS FOR VIENNA—IS EMPLOYED IN STATE AFFAIRS, AND THROUGH THE INTEREST OF HIS PATRON, CONFESSOR TO THE EMPRESS, OBTAINS A LUCRATIVE EMPLOYMENT IN THE SUITE OF THE PRINCESS, AFTERWARDS QUEEN OF FRANCE—ASSUMES THE TITLE OF COUNT—PRACTISES DRAWING AND PAINTING, PARTICULARLY PORTRAITS—FALLS IN LOVE WITH AN ACTRESS OF THE ITALIAN THEATRE AT PARIS—THE EXTRAVAGANCE OF HIS MISTRESS—BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH SIGNOR TIMBERANI, A CELEBRATED CONNOISSEUR AND PICTURE-DEALER—VERSATILITY OF HIS TALENTS—PREVAILS ON OUR ADVENTURER TO SPECULATE IN PICTURES—HE IS RUINED IN CONSEQUENCE.

OUR adventurer having profited so much by the instruction of his good friend the

priest, resolved to turn his talents thus improved to some account, and for this purpose he communicated his intentions to Father Bernard, from whom he received letters of recommendation to several friends, in his pupil's road towards Vienna ; and after receiving the most affectionate advice and admonition, touching his future conduct, from the good priest, he departed for the imperial city. Meeting with nothing but trivial incidents in his route, unworthy of a place in these original memoirs, our adventurer arrived safely at the metropolis of the German empire.

In consequence of an introductory letter from Father Bernard to no less a man than the confessor of the celebrated Maria Theresa, Empress of Germany, he was permitted to attend that ecclesiastic's levees, and in a very short time so completely ingratiated himself into his confidence, that several important missions were intrusted to his management. All of which he executed to the entire satisfaction of his employers.

About this period the beautiful princess,

and ill-fated Antoinette, the beloved daughter of the empress, was destined for the consort of the good-natured and unfortunate Louis XVI. then dauphin; and our hero, through the interest of his patron, obtained a lucrative employment in the suite of her highness, with whom he arrived in Paris. Upon this grand occasion he assumed the title of Count, by which, with the addition of his family name, we shall in future occasionally distinguish him.

In this new department he was equally diligent and prudent, keeping up a regular correspondence with his patron, and filling up his leisure hours with drawing and painting. But the branch of this delightful art in which he made the most progress, was that of portrait painting; and every person who sat to him, agreeably to the natural politesse of the French, was lavish in the praise of his skill; and as this was all they paid for their pictures, both parties were perfectly satisfied.

Thus happily situated, time rolled insensibly on, till the count, hitherto invul-

invulnerable to the shafts of love, became violently smitten with the charms of one of the actresses of the Italian opera. This fascinating nymph, who was the last person on earth to suffer any swain to pine under the cruel suspense of doubtful love, no sooner perceived her conquest, than she began to secure her prisoner, by playing off all those endearing smiles and graces which so effectually ensnare the unguarded hearts of youth. And then by granting little innocent liberties, so completely lured the victim to her snares, that nothing more was wanting to the completion of her purpose, than the certainty of his abilities to reward her liberally for the sacrifice of her charms. This important fact being once established, every barrier of female reserve was quickly removed, and the young Count Vanderwigtie was, in his own opinion, rendered one of the happiest of mortals.

In fact, he idolized her to such a degree of infatuation, that had her notions of female liberty been less enthusiastic, she might have intrahalled our hero in the still more galling chains of matrimony than those of

love. But to do our heroine justice, she was too generous to her lover, to take advantage of his frenzy, and too independent in her notions of love to make use of her ascendancy over her swains, to any such slavish purpose. However, she in some measure was determined upon sufficient compensation for the time often consumed in amorous dalliances, not always the most agreeable to her ideas of love; and therefore levied her contributions upon our hero's purse without mercy.

This extravagant humour practised too often, the count's finances were by no means adequate to supply; and therefore, remonstrances, which are the general precursors of a fatal dissolution in all love affairs, were treated with the usual hauteur of one accustomed to receive nothing but the wealth and homage of her admirers. In short, her conduct upon these occasions was the most tyrannical that can be conceived; and strange to relate, the more unreasonable her demands appeared, the more abject was his submission; so that after a

few moments' conflict, he became more supple and complaisant than ever.

Amongst the number of her *male friends*, nor dare her humble count breathe a doubt of any nearer connection, even in the teeth of ocular demonstration; we say, amongst the number of those fashionable friends who attended the fair one, was an Italian picture-merchant, whose name was Signor Timberani. This cicisbeo had acquired a good property by means of his skill in the mystery of picturecraft, at that period confined to the knowledge of a few; and being an adept at play, as well as painting, seldom failed in both occupations of acquiring the means of living luxuriously, notwithstanding he was both a glutton and an epicure. But as Fortune, like many other fickle old ladies, hath more than one voluntary at a time to gratify, our signor, in one of her blind freaks, was so completely deserted, as to lose every thing he had in the world. And thus by the frenzy of a last desperate stake, in order to recover several minor losses, involved himself in abject and complete poverty.

Thus circumstanced, our broken gamester, unlike his countrymen of old, your Catos or Brutuses, who were so little of the true philosophers as to resolve not to outlive their disappointments ; we say, this modern Roman, with more wisdom, and we had almost said fortitude, resolved to apply those talents which he had acquired for his amusement, to the relief of his immediate wants. For this purpose, he applied to the manager of the Italian opera for employment, either as a chorus singer, or a violin hand in the orchestra. Being known to this little sovereign of the mimic world, whom he had several times gulled in his former profession of a picture-merchant, for be it known to our readers, that the picture-mania is by no means confined to men of one occupation or climate, it is a universal contagion, amongst those who can afford to be mad, from which, even the wisest, thank heaven, are not exempt.

This manager, after the first emotions of his surprise had abated, and the story of the signor's loss was confirmed, agreed forthwith to engage him at a moderate salary.

But the person of our new actor being very good, and his voice and knowledge of music above mediocrity, the public were not long in distinguishing his merit by their plaudits, and he had soon an addition to his salary more appropriate to his just claims. Another circumstance tended not a little towards his increase of means : our signora, equally favoured by the town and the manager, interposed her good offices so effectually, that by paying a marked attention to his interest in that favourable quarter, he soon rose to a second rate salary and cast of parts. But as the creed of our fair Italian syren was variety, in the strictest sense of the word, prudence in a lover was as necessary a quality as any other ; therefore a convenient acquiescence with her whimsical infidelities became indispensable.

With this accomplished friend of the signora our young count became intimately acquainted ; he drew Signor Timberani's portrait, and in return received the most flattering encomiums upon his skill, from this connoisseur, who in a short time so com-

pletely infected him with the picture-mania, as to induce him to speculate in several expensive purchases, in partnership. Thus at once involved in a chaos of deception, it is not surprising, that our count, in less than a twelvemonth, found all his resources completely exhausted, his credit pledged for various sums, and his salary mortgaged for the space of four years.

In a paroxysm of rage, he now flew to his mistress, and reproached her for her unbounded extravagance; she retorted upon him the folly of embarking his means in so uncertain a species of venture. He next hinted his suspicions of the integrity of her friend Timberani, and was answered by a threat of the effects of his resentment. During these mutual reproaches the signor had arrived, and overhearing their bitter altercation, instead of interposing his friendly offices towards a compromise, stole softly into an adjoining room, and thereby became master of a secret he had hitherto remained in complete ignorance of; namely, the jealousy of the count, his partner.

Now of all the degenerate herd of the descendants of the conquerors of the world, there was none more deficient in that ancient virtue of the once valiant masters of the universe, than our signor. For notwithstanding the Herculean form, and masculine pipe of Timberani, who moreover was no castrato, a verier poltroon never disgraced the ancient dignity of the Roman name. This, however, was a profound secret, known only to one, that would never have divulged it, but for one of those untoward circumstances that sometimes discomfit the best-laid projects, and confound the most prudent schemes.

After the recent altercation between the count and his dulcinea had considerably abated, and the exertions of those talents which she never put forth in vain had contributed to soften our infatuated dupe, the signor made his appearance bon apropos. His entrance at that moment completely ratified the preliminaries of the peace, just before concluded with a kiss; namely, that whichever of the parties, for the future, began an unnecessary dispute, should be

subject to a certain penalty; and that all future reflections should be exhausted upon the old jilt dame Fortune, rather than upon those who suffered enough from her caprice, without adding ill-humour to the cup of bitterness she too often prepares for us.

After matters had been thus once more happily adjusted, and the party-trio adjourned to the opera, certain ill-natured, and uncommonly ill-favoured intruders, took their station in such troublesome directions, that all our young count's motions became completely familiar with their observations. So that the moment the opera was over, and he had left his box in company with his signora, and their friend Timberani, neither of whom chanced to act that night, he was accosted in a way not very agreeable to the feelings of any gentleman, but far less to one whose means were so incompetent to defray the positive demand of a sum not less than 1500l. British money.

In this predicament our count was prevailed upon by his partner to plead the

privilege of his station ; and the signor immediately repaired to the office of the gens d'armes upon duty, who instantly dismissed the caitiff terriers of the law, with the dreadful menace of acquainting the lieutenant of police with their want of reverence to her majesty's servants. This threat had the desired effect, and our young count was liberated upon condition of pledging his honour for appearing on a future day.

It were useless to encumber this out airy vehicle of sprightly biography with the common place luggage of a courtezan's bickerings with her dupes ; suffice it to say, that every expedient was resorted to that could enable our hero to put off the evil day ; and that few, even of the most devout Christians, ever acted more in conformity, with that excellent gospel maxim, which teaches us that—"Sufficient is the day for the evil thereof," than did our penitent count.



CHAP. VIII.

OF THE MANY INGENIOUS EXPEDIENTS MADE USE OF BY THE COUNT AND HIS PARTNER TO PROTRACT THEIR DISGRACE — CURIOS TRAFFIC CARRIED ON BY THE FIRM IN THE SALE OF COPIES FROM THE PICTURES IN THE ROYAL GALLERIES — HAMBURGH AND ENGLAND LONG THE PRINCIPAL MARKETS FOR THIS PRODUCTIVE COMMERCE — THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THOSE MEANS TO SUPPLY THEIR EXTRAVAGANCE — THE EVIL HABITS OF OUR ADVENTURER OBTAIN AT LENGTH AN ASCENDANCY — IS TEMPTED TO PURLOIN SEVERAL ORIGINAL CABINET PICTURES FROM THE GALLERIES BY HIS WORTHY PARTNER — CONFINES HIMSELF TO THE ORIGINAL OF THESE MEMOIRS, &c.

AMONGST the many shifts to which our gallant became now reduced, was that in-

genious one of extracting contributions from the labours of the defunct. Now, in order to give our readers a tolerable idea of this curious traffic, be it known, that all the picture-galleries upon the continent were open to the inspection of the curious, free of every expence ; and that very little interest was necessary for permission to copy, or, as it is more generally termed, to study, the great masters of antiquity. We had occasion in a former Chapter to remark the profession of Signor Timberani, and the talent of our adventurer also, for portrait painting ; it is hardly necessary to observe, that the signor neither could, nor would wholly relinquish so productive an employment for any other, as long as there was an opportunity of continuing it to any advantage. And as our hero's situation in the establishment of the queen's household enabled him to procure the liberty of studying the pictures in any of the Royal Galleries, for any person he chose to recommend ; the signor could not let such a profitable opportunity slip without turning it to the best account. He had therefore, in

conjunction with our hero, employed two very ingenious artists to study, and copy several of the cabinet pictures of the greatest value in the said Royal Galleries; and, after a certain process, sent them to Hamburg and other markets, from whence many found their way all over the British islands.

It is scarcely credible the vast sums which they raised in this manner for the space of two years; but as their extravagance far exceeded this, and all other resources, this expedient, productive as it was, very soon became insufficient. In this dilemma, our young count's evil habits, contracted with the banditti, began to gain a considerable ascendancy over him, and having seen what prodigious sums the copies produced, and hearing repeatedly from his partner what mighty fortunes the original pictures were worth, he took it into his head to remove one of the most valuable of these capital gems by the way of specimen. And if it turned out so productive as he was led to believe, he was determined to make a grand

sweep, and retire with them to some of the many towns, where he was assured, no impertinent enquiries were ever made about the means by which *any person* became possessed of *very fine pictures*.

He had no sooner hit upon this profitable scheme than he hastened to put it into immediate execution; and as the first step thereto, communicated his intention to the signor, who readily came into the scheme, advising, however, the immediate removal of several cabinet pictures which he should point out: stating very shrewdly, that one was as likely to be missed as a dozen, and that when missed, it would be impossible to convey any more away; that the danger as well as the punishment was equally great for one as for fifty, and therefore he advised the removal of enough to make it worth their while, and that without further delay.

However convincing this reasoning might appear, our adventurer, contrary to his first opinion, thought the removal and sale of one or two much easier effected than of fifty; and took his measures accordingly. He therefore

paired to the Gallery, one day at a convenient moment, and having just taken a very fine and valuable cabinet picture out of the frame, he was alarmed by the noise of some footsteps; upon which, being but a small piece of thin copper, he readily concealed it under his coat, and withdrew by another door, which led to his own apartments. Without losing any time, he flew to the lodgings of his partner, whom he learned had been gone out above an hour. From thence he repaired without delay to the house of the fair signora, where, finding the door open, he ran carelessly up stairs to his mistress's apartments; and passing through a room leading to her bedchamber, he kicked by accident some man's hat which lay upon the floor. When proceeding softly to the bed — good heavens! what were his emotions, when upon gently drawing the curtains, he found his mistress, and his friend the signor, in a profound slumber, tenderly locked in each other's embrace! Although his suspicions, as before hinted, had led him to suspect a great deal, and therefore prepared him in some measure for such a discovery; yet to have such a confirmation of these

suspicion thus realized, and that before his furiously jealous eyes, affected him far beyond anything he could ever have supposed. But firm presence of mind, the grand leading feature of his deceased captain's fortitude, now came very fortunately to his recollection ; and he abandoned the idea of revenge, such as he at first entertained, as unworthy of the pupil of the great Kruitzer.

He fairly concluded, that as his mistress and her paramour had levied pretty heavy contributions upon him, at various times, it was now his season for making reprisals. He therefore took the keys of the signora's escritoire very dexterously out of her pocket, which she always put under her head when she went to couch, and took the liberty also of emptying the contents of the drawers into his pockets, which amounted to a very considerable sum in louis d'ors, jewels, &c. Having so done, he threw the pockets of his mistress, keys and all, into an adjoining garden, and running down stairs, repaired directly to his own apartments, where he quickly packed up every thing of value

that was portable ; and then hurrying on to the secretary of state's office, obtained a passport for, and in the name of, his friend the signor, whose stature, complexion, and age being nearly similar to his own, the description in the passport answered to a title ; nothing more being necessary for him than to assume the name of the signor. Thus provided, he hired a berlin, and travelled with all imaginable expedition, till he arrived within a few leagues of the frontiers ; where, quitting that vehicle, he proceeded on foot across the country by a quite different route. And after many uncommon adventures, and great fatigue, arrived in Holland with the Prussian forces, who came against the Dutch patriots, where he was deprived of that inestimable jewel which has since made so much noise in the world, as shall be hereafter faithfully recorded in the subsequent pages of these original Memoirs.

CHAP. IX.

REASONS FOR ENTERING SO FAR INTO THE DETAIL OF COUNT VANDERWIGTIE'S ADVENTURES—HISTORY OF THE WELL-KNOWN SERAPHINI, A NOTED PICTURE-DEALER—REFLECTIONS, ARISING FROM THE SEVERAL RARTS WE ARE COMPELLED TO ACT UPON THE THEATRE OF THE WORLD—ANECDOTES OF INGENIOUS PICTURE-DEALERS, AND THEIR DUPES—GERNEROUS CONDUCT OF SERAPHINI TO HIS MASTER.

WE have been thus circumstantial in detailing some of the principal occurrences in the life of the celebrated adventurer Count or Cheyalier Vanderwigtie, as he has since made a very conspicuous figure in the first circles of picturecraft, as we shall have frequent occasion to relate, in the sequel of these volumes. And as some of our readers may be curiously impatient to know the

fate of the amorous pair, left undisturbed in the arms of Somnus, by the merciful and prudent count; we must intreat their patience, till we arrive together at a certain Chapter in the third volume of this veritable history. Where we beg leave to assure all those whom it may concern, that they shall overtake, and be introduced to the fond pair, warbling their softest notes to the dulcet strains of the orchestra of the Opera Italiano; delighting the most polite audience in the world, not far from the Haymarket, London.

Not many miles distant from this said market for hay and straw, and other vendible and necessary articles, some years since, dwelt the matchless Seraphini, and for the honour of that celebrated country which has given birth to so many illustrious men, long recorded in the annals of fame, we say, for the honour of Italy, Signor Seraphini there drew his first breath. But not having sufficient scope even there for his boundless genius, which very early began to dawn, he bade a long farewell to his native soil, and at the early age of fourteen

commenced actor upon the grand theatre of Europe.

Now, as it has been very justly observed by some brother author of no small consequence, no matter who, but we believe Shakespeare, that the whole universe is but a stage, and that all us poor bipeds, male and female, thereon are merely actors; we may be permitted to add, from the same grand source whence our immortal bard drew all his pictures, that Fortune has always been the dictatorial manageress; and a more arbitrary or tyrannical jilt never conducted a mimic scene. In short, all the parts she is pleased to cast for us, we are under an immediate necessity of performing; and in many a thousand instances the actors are so ill adapted for the several parts thus copiously assigned them, that all the study of the most assiduous performers can scarcely produce them a competent salary, or even preserve them from the hisses of their brother actors, many of whom are as awkwardly qualified for their respective casts as themselves.

No wonder, then, that this same impious manageress has been so virulently abused, though uniformly reputed blind, even since the first appearance of our grand-sire Adam, and his second, Eve; who, with only a hankering after a knowledge of her author, began to substitute her own silly matter. And assuming the then unnecessary office of a prompter, to her spousey and chief hero of the scene, procured for her arrogance the damnation of the piece, and hissing for him who was weak enough to take the wrong cue from such a presumptuous second. The consequence, everybody knows, was their immediate dismission from the most perfect theatre, and one of the sweetest scenes ever describ'd by the pen of the immortal Milton. Nay, it hath been asserted by many an ill-fated bard, player, and musician, that then first commenced that hellish discordant noise, which ever since hath carried such terror to their affrighted ears; and that its source is derived from that cursed deceiver, the old serpent, who was the first to hiss these original actors from the stage of Pa-

radise, after tempting them to forget the text of their Divine Author.

But to return to our young actor, the ever-to-be-lamented Signor Seraphini; he, as hath been observed, began his career upon the Theatre Royal of Europe, at a very early period of life; and the first part he is said to have gained any applause in, was that of compelling one of the largest of the feathered tribe to support him in a very hungry extremity. In fact, he performed very differently from the Spartan youth, so celebrated in history, that stole a fox which was good for nothing, and suffered it to gnaw his bowels out sooner than fail in his part. We say, our Roman youth stole a goose to prevent hunger playing similar fox-tricks upon his bowels, and concealed it so well, that in the space of four days, when it was missed, not a vestige even of the feathers could be found. Which deserved most applause we shall leave, with all due deference, to whoever may be disposed to criticise upon this our parallel, and only premise, that the one acted tragedy with applause, and the other never

failed to create laughter either in comedy or broad farce, and seldom experienced the want of success, but when compelled by fortune; he ventured out of his province, or line of acting.

Having commenced acquaintance with some of his countrymen in his route through France, he agreed for a trifling salary to accompany the party upon an expedition to London, and commenced the part of valet to one of them, who was then acknowledged the best performer on the violin in Europe. The success foreigners in general have been accustomed to meet with in England has an almost universal tendency to feed their vanity; and instead of ascribing that encouragement to an hospitable liberality in the English public, very rarely met with elsewhere, it inflates them with high-wrought notions of self-importance, and they ascribe what is the effect of national generosity to a tacit acknowledgment of their superior abilities. But with respect to our musician, and some few others, this observation does not apply; since talents he had, and these of the

very first rate ; and so far from valuing himself upon them, that he would have received the coarsest compliment from the most ignorant on his knowledge of pictures, with more satisfaction than the applause of all the first musicians in the universe fairly bestowed upon his uncommon powers as a performer. When at the same time few amateurs had less knowledge of painting, or was more frequently the dupe of the most glaring frauds daily practised upon him by the humblest professors of picturecraft.

To this eccentric genius young Seraphini paid the most humble attention ; and, by his assiduity, and well-timed flattery to his master's favourite pursuit, very soon gained an entire ascendancy over him. It was during his servitude with this descendant of Orpheus, that our young Seraphini acquired a taste for the fine arts ; and becoming acquainted with several professors of picturecraft, insensibly begot a desire in him to become a student in so productive a science. And seeing the daily sums squandered by his master, as well as others, in

this way, he very soon demanded a share of the profits thus levied upon his patron ; and few were hardy enough to dispute his right in this laudable traffic. Nay, those very few who, from extreme and greedy avarice, thought proper to dispute or refuse, would, in a short time, have gladly purchased his acquiescence in their future frauds at double the commission first demanded. But in all such cases, he was too tenacious of his authority ever to admit of any after-plea from those who had disputed his power in the first instance, or resisted the justice of his claims. In a very short time, he learned just enough English to assist his Italian effrontery, and upon this stock at length began to trade upon his own foundation. His first attempt in this new character was a very profitable and successful imposition upon his own master, which proved him eminently qualified to fill a tip-top part in the new comedy of public imposition.

Knowing this generous master was to receive a round sum of money in a few days, and concluding very fairly that he had a

superior claim to any other adventurer of the greater part of it, he conceived the following plan, which it was necessary to call in the aid of others to enable him to execute. One morning, agreeably to this purpose, he called upon two professors of the craft, of great notoriety since then, and communicated his design; stipulating the precise sum they were to share, if the *plant* succeeded, and with which they were then perfectly contented, although at this time their reputation would have commanded a third and equal share. They proceeded accordingly to put their plan into immediate execution as follows—Seraphini gave one of his confederates an old picture, of the cabinet size, nearly rubbed out, the principal value of which was the weight, it being copper: a very deep, old-fashioned carved frame, cut to the size, added considerably to the originality of its appearance. With this inestimable gem, he proceeded to a pawnbroker, an acquaintance, from whom he received upon it twenty guineas, and a ticket, as a test undeniably evident of the transaction. But then, as a collateral security to Mordecai two to one, he deposited

a gold watch, worth at least five guineas more than this conscientious usurer had lent upon the picture. This part of the grand operation being settled, in a day or two after, the next person in the drama enters upon his part, by knocking at the musician's door just as he had sat down to breakfast. His attentive valet Seraphini being then in the room by accident, and the other servants not in the way, from the same cause no doubt, another gentle knock at the door announced the impatience of the person withoutside. Seraphini, as was natural, received orders from his master to open the door, and enquire the business of whoever wanted admission. The officious lackey obeyed, and soon returned, with a note from the person he had just let in, and who waited in the hall for an answer.

The operation of this note upon the fidler's nerves was like electricity; and, without waiting to finish his breakfast, ordered a coach to be called immediately, and desired his man to tell the bearer of the note to wait till it came, and his master would go with him to the writer of the

note, with an answer. The coach being quickly brought to the door, the son of Apollo, the messenger, and the faithful Seraphini, repaired to the gentleman's lodgings who had written the magic summons. Being ushered up stairs, they were introduced to the writer of the said note, who accosted the musician very politely in French ; and they withdrew into an adjoining room, where, after a few minutes' conversation, Signor Crochetto took his leave with many bows, and retired with his trusty man Seraphini, to whom, as they returned homewards, he communicated the count's name they had just been with. The arch hypocrite rubbed his hands, in well-affected surprise, and congratulated his master on his good success, begging to know where the invaluable gem mentioned in the count's note was deposited. To this enquiry the master answered, by producing the duplicate, and they both set off with the utmost expedition towards the temple of Mammon.

The industrious valet, however, gained the first entrance, and was soon joined by

his impatient master, who paid the redemption money and interest with the greatest satisfaction and alacrity, and could hardly conceal his transports whilst his man was providing a coach. Being both seated in this numbered vehicle, he began to wet and rub the filthy surface that concealed the beauties of the inestimable jewel, now at length in his possession. But no words can describe his ecstasy, when he had, by repeatedly wetting and rubbing with his fine cambric handkerchief, brought out half of the Virgin, and part of the nose and mouth of her child. In short, his might justly be termed the true fervor of genuine devotion. And although a good catholic, had it been any other subject, and he believed it to be by the same great master, Raphael, his adoration would have been precisely the same ; his faith, like a great many others, being solely in the name of the painter, and not the subject or execution. The note received by our musician was to the following effect : "Count Trickeyasy's compliments to Signor Crochetto, and begs to trouble him with a trifling affair respecting his embarrassments, which compel him con-

trary to his intentions to request him to redeem a valuable cabinet picture, by Raphael, which the count begs his acceptance of, as the only tribute now in his power to bestow; for the frequent delight he has experienced from the signor's unrivalled performance.---P. S. Count Trickey's valet, who is the bearer of this, will inform Signor Crochetto of the particulars, as also where his master may be spoken with for five minutes."

In short, this trifling embarrassment under which the count laboured was *no more than one hundred and twenty guineas*; and, together with the twenty guineas already paid for the redemption of the Virgin and Child from the degrading purgatory of a pawnbroker's warehouse, made in the whole a gross sum of one hundred and forty guineas, which was more by sixty than the signor had yet received. The awkwardness of this temporary inconvenience was quickly removed by the ingenuity of the count's man, who proposed a note of hand for the deficiency, which, being as speedily complied with, the unique gem

became the indisputable property of the too happy Signor Crochetto.

But now another difficulty arose, which seemed to bid defiance to all remedies. This was no more than the danger attending the removal of the dirty varnish which obscured the matchless tints of the divine Raphael. Upon this occasion, recourse was had to some of the most knowing doctors of the picturecraft; all of whom being the worthy coadjutors of the signor's confidential valet, took especial care to enhance the value of the gem, in all their mingled lamentations for the state it was in; and the result was, that one and all declared it to be covered with immoveable oil varnish.

In this dilemma it was natural for the disconsolate owner, like persons in all other hopeless cases, to consult with every person likely or unlikely to recommend any thing in the shape of a remedy, when all remedies are too late. The signor's foible being generally known at this period to most of the real connoisseurs in London, one of that number, to whom he was mak-

ing his moan, very shrewdly suspected some trick. He accordingly returned with the signor to the apartments of the latter, and the jewel was produced, and handed by its sorrowful owner to his friend, with all the marks of affectionate regret, arising from the state it had been reduced to. His friend having examined this chef d'œuvre with attention and surprise for some time, delivered it into the hands of its good-natured possessor, whose rueful countenance he could hardly contemplate without laughing, when he pronounced the dreadful verdict that confirmed the former opinion of all those whom Crochetto had consulted upon this momentous subject. But when, in answer to his question respecting the price, he heard the words pronounced with so much indifference, which included a loss to the speaker of at least one hundred and fifty-five guineas, he was fired with honest indignation at the conduct of those insidious miscreants, who could thus plunder without mercy one of the most harmless and amiable beings upon the face of the earth; one who, in the fervour of a false enthusiasm for the only art he was completely

ignorant of, subjected himself to the most painful situations an honest mind can possibly be reduced to, in order to avoid the consequences of such an extravagant infatuation.

In short, it would be painful to the humane reader, were we to detail the number of privations this worthy being submitted to for the indulgence of his favourite, but imaginary pursuit. No wonder then, if his friend, who knew all this, and had frequently relieved his wants, should thus indeed feel indignant at the authors of such bare-faced rapacity. He therefore, sans ceremoni, insisted upon knowing the whole history of the transaction, which, when he had heard, he was resolved to trace to the authors, and secure his friend at least from the payment of the note for sixty guineas. He therefore, without censuring the signor for this fresh act of imprudence, in not consulting his judgment, to which he knew himself at all times welcome, well knowing that the weakness of attempting to judge for himself was not only the chief source of his friend's malady, but the very essence of

his delight also. He therefore took his hat, without leaving behind him the sting of a single reproach, in order to serve his deluded friend as far as the nature of the case would admit; and in his way to the house of one of the honourable conspirators in this transaction, whom he suspected from the description of the signor, was fortunate enough to meet him in his way thither.

After accosting him in a friendly manner, for he well knew the value of keeping upon civil terms at least, with all the virtuous fraternity, having purchased the said knowledge at a very handsome price; he invited him to a dish of chocolate at the St. James's coffee-house, just by, and they stepped in there. General topics being chatted over, the connoisseur introduced the subject of picturecraft, by lamenting the general rapacity of the professors, remarking upon the impolicy of cutting so deep and unmercifully, and the consequences that too frequently resulted from such glaring abuses of superior cunning; and, amongst many other instances, quoted

a late trial, where, notwithstanding the artists and some members of the craft had differed so widely in their opinions respecting the originality of the picture then in dispute, yet one and all were agreed as to the exorbitance of the price charged; which was the sole cause, as they all well knew, of the matter being ever litigated to the general disgrace of the profession. All this being admitted by his patient hearer, the connoisseur brought forward his friend's subject as a recent instance of a case in point, except in the exorbitance of the price given for a picture; and there indeed the comparison was about a bag of wafers to a bag of louis d'ors. Declaring that all his information proceeded from an accidental meeting with some native practitioners, who were determined to spirit up the musician to a prosecution of all that were concerned in what they called a wicked conspiracy to defraud a worthy gentleman that had been so liberal a customer to them all. Nay, continued he, one of them hinted some strong suspicions of Seraphini being a principal, for he could swear to the picture having been a substi-

tute for a pane of glass in one of his workshop windows for more than seven years, when Seraphini had it taken out, and paid him five shillings for it; and although somebody had been laying an oil varnish over it, upon which they had scumbled in a Virgin and Child, and so dirtied it down, *se eundem arteum*, he could safely swear to the picture in any court in England.

To all this the professor assented, inveighing bitterly against such impolitic extortion, and they parted. The picture-dealer to communicate all he had heard to his confederate Seraphini, and the connoisseur to watch his motions at a convenient distance, who, as soon as he saw the dealer housed at the ~~musician's~~, was fully confirmed in his first suspicions; and although what he related in the coffee-house was for the greater part founded on probable conjecture only, the major part of it actually happened to be fact.

Being thus far satisfied, he was determined to prosecute his plan of detecting such plunderers with vigour and effect, and

returned to his own home, where he expected another gentleman equally distinguished with himself for taste, honour, and benevolence. Having communicated the affair to this friend, they proceeded without delay to take the most prompt and efficacious measures to obtain redress. But their laudable intentions were marred by the superior generalship of the confederates : for no sooner had the professor entered the house of our amateur, than he communicated all he had heard at the coffee-house, and the necessity there was of falling upon some expedient immediately to evade the threatened prosecution ; and their fertile brains were not long in discovering and applying a most effectual one. For this purpose, the third person in the conspiracy, alias the count, was called forward to sustain his part, which he did to the entire satisfaction of those gentlemen of the craft whom it mostly concerned, namely, Seraphini, and his two other associates.

The count having supplied Seraphini with a phial of liquid, the latter immediately

proceeded to his master, telling him, with every mark of joy in his countenance, which Garrick himself could not have better counterfeited, that the count had left behind him by some accident an invaluable liquid, which the landlord where he lodged had found, and along with it directions how to use it in the removal of any varnish ever yet used, and of any length of time remaining upon a picture.

This welcome intelligence completely restored the drooping spirits of our signor amateur, who instantly set about the task of applying, according to the directions, the precious elixir which was to restore the pristine colours, and thus bring about the salvation of such an unparalleled gem. In this experiment he was assisted by his faithful valet; and the liquid being left upon the surface of the picture for the space of sixteen hours as directed, the operators withdrew from their labour of that period. Long before their return to this grand process, and the renewal of their labour, the two friendly gentlemen before mentioned arrived with their plan for the recovery of

their friend's money if possible ; but, at all events, to save him from the further plunder of sixty guineas. Before, however, they could enter upon the business, the signor, impatient to communicate his grand secret, and its promised effects, led them directly to the scene of his wonderful experiment, declaring, as they went up stairs, his entire confidence in the count's knowledge, whose departure from England he lamented as a national loss, on account of the many useful discoveries he might have communicated to so generous a nation ; had not a few self-interested individuals of it, by their mercenary conduct, compelled him to retire from us in disgust. He then offered to back his opinion with any sum, respecting the power of the said liquid, in removing any varnish, however old and strong, within the time specified in the directions for using it.

Suspecting still some new trick, they however accompanied their deluded friend to his repertory, where being come, he flew to the picture with an air of triumph. But taking it in his hand, and rubbing the sur-

face gently over with a piece of flannel, he appeared panic-struck at finding the truth of his own assertions confirmed, respecting the power of the liquid. In fact not only the Virgin and her Son had been removed, oil varnish and all, but the very priming vanished along with them, leaving the bare copper as a clear proof of the merit of the all-potent elixir. Thus also departed every vestige of proof, upon which the two worthy gentlemen his friends meant to have grounded a prosecution against the ingenuous projectors of this conspiracy. While they escaped by these means with impunity, the poor simple credulous amateur, like too many others we shall have occasion to portray in these Memoirs, became more confident in his knowledge from this disaster, and still more kind to the author and chief projector of his distress.

As for the two real connoisseurs, his undoubted friends, finding their remonstrances were all in vain, and seeing the infatuated man incorrigibly bent upon his own ruin, very unlike some other physicians, they left him, lamenting at the same time the

malady which was out of their power to cure. In a very few years after, this confirmed picture-dupe, just before his demise, was reduced to the last extremity : and after that event, when all his pictures, and the whole of his valuable collection of drawings, prints, fossils, and a long *et cetera* of virtù, were brought to the hammer, they produced about enough to bury him. And the faithful Seraphini, for he never deserted his master, has been often heard to declare, since the poor signor's exit, that he could not have expended in such deceptions less than three or four thousand pounds.

One thing, in justice to the character of the much-regretted Seraphini we are here proud to record ; namely, that he shared with his kind master to the last shilling he possessed of the gleanings of what he had formerly gulled him ; and that the very same arts which he practised in conjunction with others of the craft, in easing his friend of the burthen of his superfluous cash, he pursued with redoubled avidity, to procure him support and comfort in his last and most necessitous condi-

tion. How happy would we be to record another solitary instance of generosity like this, in the course of the subsequent pages of these Memoirs, in any of the numerous class belonging to the honourable fraternity.

CHAP. X.

MELANCHOLY EXIT OF THE GRATEFUL SERAPHINI—APOSTROPHE TO THE MEMORY OF MONSIEUR PICOT AND HIS FRIEND—REASONS GIVEN BY THAT FRIEND FOR HIS MODE OF DEALING WITH THE GREAT—ANECDOTE OF A CELEBRATED ARTIST—FATAL EFFECTS ARISING FROM LEARNING—A VULGAR TASTE FOR THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE AT THIS TIME ABOUT TO PREVAIL—DISPUTES BETWEEN THE PARTISANS OF THE OLD, OR BLACK SCHOOL, AND THE MODERN—GREAT AND NOBLE PERSONAGES ABROAD DESCENDING TO BECOME MERE PICTURE-DEALERS—POWERFUL ADVOCATES SPRING UP IN FAVOUR OF MODERN ARTISTS, &c.

AFTER the just tribute paid to the heart of poor Seraphini in our last Chapter, it is melancholy to record the fate that deprived the world of such a man. Unfortunately, he joined to a voracious appetite all the

niceness of an epicure; and all his industry and art were at last incompetent to provide for the cravings of a stomach which seemed to increase as the means of supply became exhausted; and notwithstanding the many successful strokes he made in several squares at the west end of the town, particularly when the mechanical process of multiplying pictures was in its infancy, and the best copyists were employed to touch upon, or give something like the finish and spirit to the roughly-manufactured copy. We say, during this period of the infantine state of the polygraphic mystery, our ingenious Serry made many a capital hit. Yet, notwithstanding all this, fate had so ordained it, that he was suffocated one day, in the course of his favourite exercise, namely, eating, or rather devouring, artichokes; but that sad catastrophe was certainly occasioned by the want of his usual quantity of butter, to prepare a passage for them to his voracious stomach.

Peace to thy manes, honest, independent Monsieur Picot, whose incorruptible at-

tachment to thy friends hath never been exceeded, even in the old romances of extravagant friendship ! and which the prudent part of mankind have with so much laudable caution endeavoured constantly to erase from the unledged tablets of juvenile recollection ! Thou wert also the friend and companion of the facetious Signor Seraphini, the laughing picture-merchant. And many is the time and often, in our hearing, hast thou rated his bargains, and scoffed at his losses ; which rating, scoffing, and abuse, the philosophic Italian was wont to answer by a smiling declaration, as trite as it was just, that he was only labouring actively in his vocation ; that his customers were pleased with the delusion he was at the pains of furnishing them, and in lieu thereof provided for the wants of a craving appetite, which he could never satisfy by all they would ever deign to afford him, for the practice of any virtuous or laborious pursuit in the whole catalogue of industry *.

* Our readers are requested to observe, that the *Seraphini here described* is not the same, and should not be

We forgot to mention, that this same Monsieur Picot was an engraver of no mean repute, and the friend and confidant of a late ingenious but unfortunate artist, whom he secreted in his house for a considerable time, when a great reward was offered for his apprehension; and where, had he remained a little longer, which his friend with tears entreated him to do, he might in all probability have escaped to the continent, in a small vessel provided for that purpose by Picot; which vessel arrived two or three days subsequent to his apprehension, through the unfortunate, and, in the present case, ever-to-be-lamented error of teaching the children of poor people to read and write.

About this period a vulgar taste for the servile imitations of nature began to display itself, to the great offence of a number

confounded with *him* who was the servant of the celebrated Giordini; though in all respects, save one, there was a perfect similarity: namely, the musician's valet never lost an opportunity of gulling even his own parents and friends; whereas the former only cozened all the strangers he possibly could.

of exalted personages, who were admirable judges of the divine art of painting, such as it was supposed to be some two or three centuries past. Amongst the foremost of those who were denominated by their adversaries partisans of the old, or black school, were several foreign gentlemen, who were very justly supposed to know a vast deal more than they could explain in our language, or perhaps in any other; and whose prejudices in favour of the black school had their origin in a much more rational and solid motive than their enemies were willing to allow.

But as this was a secret known to but very few besides themselves, and these few too nearly concerned to divulge it, the daily sarcasms thrown out by the moderns, respecting the folly and madness of such prejudices, were disregarded by this honourable junto of venerable ancients. For who could suppose, that was not in the secret, that counts, barons, knights (and, as every body said, barren-knights forsooth,) lords, earls, dukes, nay even princes themselves, would cross the channel, and descend to

traffic amongst a nation of shopkeepers, and put in daily practice the whole legerdemain of picturecraft? Yet nothing is more true; and so apt are the best of men to fall into the errors of their neighbours, that several of the nobility and gentry of our own soil soon caught the contagion. So prevalent is example, especially when set by a number of persons filling an exalted sphere of life, and who were formerly in the habit of spurning, with the utmost contempt, every expression that bore the least affinity to traffic.

With such powerful adversaries as these had the admirers of the vulgar taste to contend, when a phenomenon started from the wilds of Suffolk, aided by his great precursor from the mountains of Wales; a third followed from the bogs of Ireland, with several others of the same class, in point of talent; and so powerful a diversion was made in favour of the moderns, through the exertions of these daubers, that a general perversion of taste seemed for a time to prevail. These simpletons taking it into their heads, that to portray nature all beau-

tifully wild as she sometimes appears, or when adorned by the cultivating art of man, would be, if faithfully executed, something very like landscape-painting. That green was quite as pleasing a colour to the eye, for trees or grass, as crimson, or purple; and that cows and horses looked nearly as well in the black, brown, white, or brindle nature had given them, as those in which some fine Venetian, and other painters had decorated them. Such as a lively green and yellow, or a light pink and blue; or in short any other beautiful colour fancifully bestowed upon them, by the classic taste of their various ancient delineators.

So to work they went accordingly, and when they had given form to these ideal subjects, agreeable to such simple principles as before described, they had the weakness and vanity to call their untaught pigmy efforts by the same lofty title which distinguishes the works of the great masters of antiquity; namely—Pictures. And strange to tell, such was the infatuation of numbers, many of whom were, before this perversion of taste, justly reputed wise, that

they actually sanctioned these natural abortions thus arrogantly christened by their own illegitimate parents.

It would be endless to relate the numerous contentions between these rival parties; one side endeavouring to account for this innovating mania from a love of novelty, which they asserted was characteristic of the good people of England, while the other party justified their predilection for the simple excellence of the moderns, by the most silly of all arguments; namely, a reference to the original objects for the faithfulness of the copies. This was finely ridiculed by the sticklers for antiquity, who admitted the justness of the argument, when applied and confined to that inferior branch of the arts, called portrait-painting. But very reasonably scouted all the application of such common-place logic in the more sublime cases of historical and landscape painting.

In aid of the former vulgar English opinion, an advocate started about this time, whose arguments, strong, vigorous, and

strikingly obvious to ocular demonstration, being all upon copper, and from that metal impressed upon thousands of sheets of paper; which magical impressions became so strikingly conclusive, that the taste of the whole country was thereby completely vitiated; and that to such an uncommon degree, that the crude daubings of a Wilson, a Gainsborough, a Barrett, a Mortimer, and a Reynolds, appeared to receive a decided preference to the immortal labours of the first painters of sacred antiquity. Nay, the vulgar humour of this national giant, yclept Hogarth, thus completely bore away the palm from every antagonist and competitor. And so very difficult is it root out prejudices thus firmly grounded in national ignorance, that many retain their opinions to this hour, and others are adopting them daily. But this arises from a want of mental industry, whereby they might, with but little exertion, suffer themselves to be persuaded, by those who are justly attached to the ancients, how erroneous it is to appeal to nature as a criterion, where simple nature only is delineated.

Indeed there have been from time to time, since the aforesaid champions, several of no inferior name, whose efforts in the modern cause hath been attended with no small portion of success; and whose laudable zeal in defence of their fame shall be recorded in the subsequent volumes of these Memoirs. And the assistance derived from the Royal Academy, particularly in the higher walks of the fine arts, under the impulse given by that Herculean and persevering genius, Barry, is of too much importance to be glanced over by the cursory observations contained in a few pages. We shall, therefore, in the course of the present work, present our readers with a distinct Chapter on this subject.

We come next to a circumstance which cannot be fairly omitted here, which in its nature and consequence is calculated at once to surprise and stagger our belief; namely, that a genius should arise in the very meridian of the contention already mentioned, who, without any of the advantages arising from the patronage of the

great, in general thought to be indispensably necessary to the introduction of an artist, burst forth upon the public, in despite of all the parade of etiquette. And by the supreme force of an early cultivated natural genius, has preserved his station amongst the first rank of either foreign or national cotemporary painters for more than twenty years; and that, under every disadvantage but one, encouragement; which no man could have more imprudently abused for some time past, in every species of low and vulgar dissipation. During which long period of public favour, the multitude of pictures painted by him far exceed in number those of any other master, ancient or modern, of his age. And the same may be said respecting the number of copies after him; to which we may fairly add, that all these, together with the originals, several of which are little more than sketches, have, during the above-mentioned period, been poured in upon the markets like a deluge. Chiefly through the medium of ignorant auctioneers, exhibitions, and contracts of the most selfish description; together with a race of money-

lenders, publicans, and the very worst of sinners, usurious tradesmen ; all of whom have long made a prey of the folly and the talents of this uncommon and eccentric being. And yet, notwithstanding all this, his works have maintained a superiority of price over the productions of almost any other living painter, a circumstance scarcely to be paralleled in the whole history of the arts. But of these, and several other matters, we shall have occasion to treat more at large hereafter, and now return to our long lost subject, the beautiful picture from the divine pencil of the immortal Guido.*

* This, and some other *allusions* to our much-lamented friend, the late G. Morland, which may be found throughout this work, were written more than a twelvemonth previous to his death ; and the conversation respecting them, as mentioned in our Biographical Memoir of him, is the circumstance which principally induced the author to submit that sketch to the public, which now accompanies our genuine picture of the great and little world.



CHAP. XI.

IN WHICH THE ADVENTURES OF THE COUNT VANDERWIGTIE ARE RESUMED—AFTER MANY A WEARY MILE'S TRAVELLING ON FOOT FROM THE TIME HE QUITTED THE BERLIN, ARRIVES IN THE NIGHT AT AN INN—PRECAUTIONS TAKEN THERE FOR THE SECURITY OF HIS PROPERTY—UNCOMMONLY PROPHETIC DREAM—LOSS OF HIS BUNDLE OF CLOTHES, AND THE DEATH OF ONE OF THE THIEVES—HIS APARTMENT IS BESIEGED BY A PARTY OF SOLDIERS, &c.

IT will be recollected by our attentive reader, that when we left the Count Vanderwigtie, at the latter end of the eighth Chapter, he quitted his Berlin at a day or two's journey from the frontiers; when, not judging it safe to travel any longer in a direct road, he took his route across the country, unsuspected of being in possession of so much wealth, and so capital a pro-

duction of the inimitable Guido. But with all these advantages, our adventurer was very far from being tranquil; his fears were alarmed by the smallest accident; and as night approached, he was still more uneasy when he saw no prospect of any entertainment to refresh him after so fatiguing a journey. And to this, or any other hardship, our count had now been long a stranger; looking round with eager and enquiring eyes, and there being no appearance of any house within the bounds of his utmost ken, he felt an unusual depression of spirits.

Thus circumstanced, his wealth was more than literally a burthen to him; his mind now felt the weight and pressure of riches; and, like many others who are cursed with the possession of more than they can enjoy, he every moment became more sensible of the truth of what his mind constantly suggested; namely, that riches, in several cases, are but in reality a grievous and oppressive burthen to their possessor. After several of these comfortless reveries, during which he had advanc-

ed a few leagues, without knowing whether, he perceived a glimmering light, which in some measure revived his drooping spirits. And travelling on in that small luminous direction, soon perceived, to his great joy, that it proceeded from a house, which proved upon a nearer approach to be a mean sort of an inn. Having gained admission, he was determined, at all events, to make his quarters good for that night; he, therefore, gave immediate orders for supper in a room to himself. Where being shewn, he took his seat in apparent security: his first care, however, was to examine his apartment with the utmost circumspection, which precaution became the more necessary, from a groupe of ill-favoured soldiers, who were seated by the kitchen fire, and as he passed towards his room, seemed to eye him with something more than curious attention. Having satisfied his mind respecting the security of his quarters, he took from his bundle a small square box, which contained his money and jewels; as also, the paper parcel which contained our subject, the invaluable gem, which he prized above all the rest. These, his chief and

only treasures, he joined together, and wrapping them in one of his shirts, tied them up in an old handkerchief, and laid them carelessly upon a shelf over the chimney-piece, then tying up the large bundle of clothes, from whence they were taken, he placed it upon a chair near the bed side.

All things being thus prudently disposed of, he sat down by the fire, and read to amuse himself till supper was brought up; and of which having made a hearty meal, and drank in proportion, he fastened the door and retired to his bed. Where, placing his pistols underneath the bundle on the chair by his side, and a poignard under his pillow, he recommended himself to the care of the Virgin; and thus, under the double protection of heaven and his own prudence, he fell into a secure sleep; from which, in less than two hours, he was disturbed by the sound of a violent crash near his bed. But being under the influence of great and unusual bodily fatigue, his sleep experienced but a momentary interruption from the noise, and he began, in a state of half sleeping and waking doubtfulness, to

conclude the noise proceeded from a disturbed and confused sort of dream. In this state of uncertainty, he relapsed into a perplexed slumber; when he dreamt he was benighted in a hovel, where a thunder-storm overtook him, and the wind and rain beat with violence into every crevice of his abode. The contention of the elements seemed to encrease with the duration of his slumber to that degree of violence, till at length one dreadful explosion of the full-fraught clouds seemed to rend in twain the feeble structure of the hovel, where he dreamt he had taken shelter; when instantly after the clap of thunder, a deluge of rain made its way through every aperture in the hovel to the corner in which he lay, and overwhelmed him in an instant.

The efforts he made to extricate himself from all this imaginary peril, at length perfectly awoke him,—every nerve trembling from mental exertion, and the cold and clammy sweat of nightly terror streaming from every pore of his wearied body! In short, the terror inspired by his dream could receive no more additional power.

when he awoke and found it partly realized. For sitting up in his bed, he was surprized to find himself in the same predicament, he had just made such efforts in his sleep to escape. It is true indeed, the inn where he was exceeded the hovel, and so did his bed and room ; but the effect of the storm appeared nearly similar. His bed being soaked through with the rain; and the wind continued to roar through the several apertures of the broken casement, which he recollects was whole enough when he went to bed.

In this situation it was impossible to remain in bed ; the last glowing ember of the fire had just ceased to emit either heat or light; and prudence forbade him disturbing the house. There was not, however, much time for deliberation; his wet and cold situation led him insensibly to his bundle to get a dry shirt ; but what was his surprise upon finding it gone from the chair, where he was confident it lay when he went to bed, and under which he had placed his pistols, which still remained. His amazement at the disappearance of his bundle could only be

equalled by his disappointment in being thus deprived of his linen.

His next care was the small parcel which contained his all, and which fortune, as an ample compensation for his frequent disappointments, had in this favourable instance preserved to him. This lucky circumstance he attributed to the careless manner and place where he left it; for he was now fully convinced, that what appeared to his disturbed imagination, in effect sufficient to awake him with such a crash, was in reality the breaking of the glass of the casement in the precipitate retreat of the thieves, who had made their rescape by that opening with his bundle. Nor was he long at a loss in fixing his suspicions upon some, if not all the military party, that eyed him so attentively upon his arrival at the inn.

Having by this time disengaged himself of his wet shirt, and put on the remainder of his clothes without one, a shift not uncommon to more itinerants than our hero, he withdrew as far as possible from the open and shattered casement, there to await with

patience the approach of the morning, which was now coming apace. Here it soon occurred to him, that possibly these military freebooters, finding themselves disappointed in their hope of a prize, might return and make themselves amends for being thus baulked. He accordingly armed himself with a pistol in one hand and his poignard in the other ; putting the other pistol in his pocket, as a reserved shot in case of extremity. For, although, his courage was of the prudent kind, such as always prompted him rather to avoid, than seek danger in every possible case, yet that same prudence suggested the necessity of his defending all he had in the world at the hazard of his life, in preference to submitting to its removal, by which event the remainder of that life would be hardly worth the pains of preserving : add to all this, the lessons of intrepidity he had imbibed whilst under the tuition of the brave Kruitzer, and we need not be surprised at his resolution upon this momentous occasion. The event, however, soon proved, that all his preparations for defence, were at least necessary.

Day had scarcely begun to dawn, when he heard two or three voices under his window, and although what passed below did not reach his ear distinctly, he was presently too well assured that this early visit was intended for him. In a few moments the head and shoulders of one of the party appeared through the casement; and slipping softly down from the window-seat, which was more than four feet from the floor, stole on his tip-toes to the bed. Where, with one uplifted hand, in which was a long, pointed knife, he with the other began feeling about for his victim. At this dreadful crisis, another of the assailants had mounted the breach, and was just entering to the assistance of his comrade, when our adventurer finding no longer time was to be lost, discharged his pistol with so sure an aim, as sent the intruder tumbling back to his companions in the yard, as quiet as a couple of leaden bullets in his heart could make him. He then sprang forward, and with one blow of the butt end of his pistol laid the other sprawling by the bed side; and before he could recover from the blow, plunged his poignard into the wretch's

breast, and immediately taking his other pistol, ran to defend the window.

But his victory was now complete, the remainder of the enemy quickly made all the haste they possibly could from their dead companion, leaving our hero completely master of the ground. By this time the morning was sufficiently advanced to distinguish objects, but before our hero had time to examine his prisoner's features, a loud knocking was heard at the outer door of the inn; while a confused sort of noise prevailed upon the stairs, and the several other apartments on the same floor with our adventurer's; who, with great presence of mind, untied the bundle which lay on a shelf over the chimney, and putting his small square box into his coat pocket, he deposited the small parcel, in which was carefully wrapt the Virgin, by Guido, in his bosom, and buttoning up his coat over it, stood prepared at the door of his room. In one hand he brandished his bloody poignard, and in the other his undischarged pistol, ready cocked, waiting with cool determination the event.

Presently he heard the outer door open, and could discover amongst the confusion of several voices one that he thought familiar to his ear; these and several others now approached nearer to the staircase, and he could distinctly hear a number of persons in a sort of bustle, forcing their way up stairs. The door of our adventurer's chamber was now besieged, and admittance peremptorily demanded under pain of immediate death. When, after a short parley, our hero agreed to admit them, upon the sole condition of honourable treatment, which the besiegers having sworn to perform, our adventurer opened the door and surrendered; but what was his astonishment, on perceiving the officer of the party to be no other, than one of his late comrades in the service of the gallant Kruitzer, which they, and several others had quitted upon the demise of that renowned chief, for the more honourable service of their respective sovereigns.

Their mutual surprise, we may conceive, was very great, and as both had their reasons for concealing the cause of it at pre-

sent, after a friendly shake of the hand, Lieutenant Nutzell and Count Vanderwigtie withdrew to a private room, where a faithful detail of all that had happened was given by our hero to his old comrade: who in his turn acquainted our hero, that his regiment lay encamped about four miles distant, and that the party who were quartered at the inn belonged to the same; that he being out with a foraging party at day-break, they were met by four of their companions coming from their quarters, and bearing the body of another badly wounded, and seemingly dying. These four soldiers made up such a story respecting their companion's fate, as caused the lieutenant to surround the inn with his party. "Though in truth," said he, "I had my suspicions of their being at their old tricks, notwithstanding two belonging to their company was shot for plundering a peasant's cottage within a week, by order of the commander in chief. In short, my friend," continued the lieutenant, "their invincible attachment to thieving is such, that if a gallows was erected in every field throughout our march, want of opportunity

alone could prevent them from meriting it every mile we should proceed ; therefore make yourself perfectly easy ; their character alone, without another circumstance in your favour, would be sufficient to acquit you before any tribunal in the German dominions."

The two friends now joined the rest of the party in the kitchen, where a good fire had been prepared for them ; and the wounded assassin being brought down stairs, and a surgeon of the regiment having arrived, to whom Nutzell briefly related the whole matter, omitting none of the circumstances that were in his friend's favour. The surgeon, after examining the wounded delinquent, declared his sorrow at finding the rascal had escaped, he being only in a swoon through loss of blood, and bitterly regretted the necessity his professional duty had imposed upon him, of restoring such a villain to the disgrace of the regiment. In fact, the poignard had only glanced through his right breast, and perforated the fleshy membrane that divides the ribs ; and the contusion on the side of

his head, from the blow of the pistol, was of no more consequence than that of having stunned him, very luckily for our hero, just at the critical time..

All things being thus far adjusted, our adventurer, as an honourable prisoner, set off with the party, about nine o'clock in the morning, for the camp; where being arrived, the lieutenant delivered his prisoner at head quarters, and made his report of the whole transaction so favourable to our hero, though nothing contrary to the truth, that the commanding officer instantly discharged him. And he thus escaped from a threatened difficulty, with the loss of his bundle, containing, amongst other useful articles, several good shirts, fine cravats, silk stockings, and pocket handkerchiefs. About which, his friend, in confidence, whispered something like a suspicion of their being in possession of one of the superior officers, who at that time stood in too much need of such articles to be over-scrupulous about the means by which they had been obtained; though, in this instance, they were the price of one man's

life, and very near the destruction of another, who being so much disabled, might be fairly reckoned a loss of two men to the regiment. But as many were daily killed off for a much less valuable booty, the conscience of the officer was silenced upon that account, although the deficiency in numbers every day appeared against him on the muster-roll.

After several fruitless endeavours of the lieutenant to persuade his friend to engage in this honourable service, and to enter himself in their still more honourable regiment, these old companions took an affecting farewell of each other; the lieutenant furnishing our adventurer with a shirt out of his slender stock; and the other, in return, prevailed upon his friend to accept a few louis d'ors from his abundance. The kind-hearted Nutzel, in the warmth of his friendship, forced his old companion to accept of an escort through the dominions of the elector of Saxony, to the king of Prussia's; which piece of kindness the count would have gladly dispensed with, from the excellent character he had already re-

ceived of the regiment; and by his late experience, none was more ready to acknowledge how deserving they were of it than himself. But his friend endeavoured to persuade him, that when upon duty, and where their honour was concerned in the performance of that service, nothing could induce them to betray their trust. With these assurances, the count affected to be satisfied, and set off with the party, which consisted of three hussars, and a guide. The latter marched with our adventurer on foot, and the hussars, well mounted, brought up the rear.

In this order they travelled for more than five hours, a distance of nearly twenty miles, without ever halting, when, arriving at the banks of a river, the guide made a signal, upon which the hussars dismounted; and the only one of the party that had a knapsack, spread its contents on the grass; and we can assure our readers, that very little invitation was necessary to induce our adventurer to fall to, though the fare was rather coarse, after such a tramp. This river, which was an arm of the Elbe, being

the extent of the journey they had orders to escort him, after their repast he was conducted by the guide, on horseback, across the river, who told him he was now in the territories of the king of Prussia, and therefore in perfect safety.

Our hero, notwithstanding all his prudence, could not resist the first impulse of gratitude upon this pleasing intelligence; and therefore presented the guide with a louis, to be divided equally amongst the four for their attention, and kindness in sharing their provisions with him. Whatever effect the sight of so much money now might have upon the cupidity of the party, certain it is, they fulfilled their orders with the greatest exactness, and, contrary to the doubts of our adventurer, acquitted themselves throughout the march like true men of honour.

CHAP. XII.

THE COUNT JOURNEYS ON, OVER A DREARY HEATH, WITH SPIRIT, UNDER AN IDEA OF PERFECT SECURITY ON PRUSSIAN GROUND—DISCOVERS A PARTY OF PRUSSIAN CAVALRY, TO HIS GREAT JOY—IS TAKEN PRISONER, AND EXAMINED AS A SPY—RAPACITY OF THE COLONEL—THEY PLUNDER HIM OF EVERY THING BUT THE PICTURE, &c..

BEING now on Prussian ground, and fraught with the idea of perfect security, our adventurer marched on with a light heart and unabated vigour, in the direction which the guide had pointed out; and after full many a weary step, at the end of three hours' march, found himself upon a dreary heath, about twelve or thirteen miles from the river he had crossed; and in all that distance, he had not been so fortunate

as to meet with a single being, although a few miserable cottages were just visible here and there. A like solitude seemed to prevail amongst the brute creation : scarcely a cow, horse, or sheep was to be seen in any of this wide and lonely direction. But the security he fancied himself in kept up his spirits throughout this dreary march ; when, journeying on about mid-way over the heath or plain, he perceived a party of horsemen at some distance. Overjoyed at so pleasing a sight, he mended his pace, and, in less than a quarter of an hour, he perceived they were approaching in the right direction. This encouraged him to redouble his exertions, and they were soon near enough for him to count more than fifty dragoons, clothed in the Prussian uniform.

This was a most agreeable sight to our hero, although the pleasing idea it inspired was but of short duration ; for the officer of the advanced guard, addressing him in French, and then in German, was so far from being satisfied with the answers he received from our hero, that he was direct-

ly made a prisoner by his order; and then mounting him behind one of the dragoons, the party pursued their route to head-quarters, about two leagues distant. Being arrived there, he underwent a long examination, the result of which was, that he was ordered into confinement, under strong suspicions of being a spy. And now, for the first time, he found to his cost, that his old commander, the generous Kruitzer, and his gang, were but mere bunglers in the art of rifling their prisoners, compared to the regular adepts he was now among; for the Prussian colonel had him stripped, for the purpose, as he asserted, of discovering state-papers; but having possession of the count's small square box, the contents of which had no sooner gladdened his rapacious eye, than he ordered him to be stripped of every vestige of clothing; nor was hardly satisfied, but that some more of the precious metal was concealed between his skin and flesh; and for that purpose would have had him flayed, but for fear that his trouble might be repaid by a disappointment: so that, under this shallow pretext of searching for

state-papers, he left our poor adventurer in a miserable state indeed.

As for the master-piece of the divine Guido, it had nearly undergone the pains of martyrdom ; for, being carefully wrapped up in several folds of soft tissue paper, and then enclosed in strong cartridge, the expectations of this noble commander were wound up to the highest pitch. The weight of the copper, too, led him to imagine it was a golden prize of no small value. But, after releasing it from its paper bondage, and seeing nothing that he had any idea of but the copper, he could hardly restrain the violence of his chagrin. After handing it about among his inferior Goths that surrounded him, and none being able, by repeated scratching and scoring on its back with their knives, to conclude it was any more than mere copper, the great commander, in a fit of disappointment, threw it behind a wood fire, which, fortunately for the lovers of the sublime in painting, happened to be very low at that propitious juncture.

Our hero, upon this trying occasion, evinced all the fondness of a parent for a darling child in such a horrid situation, and springing forward naked as he was, rescued his jewel from the devouring element, at the expence of two or three severe burns. This circumstance excited the utmost surprise in the sagacious commander and his enlightened officers ; and not being able to comprehend the motive of such an extraordinary proceeding, very sagaciously ascribed it to the effects of magic : judging very fairly, that the figures upon one side of the copper were his familiars, and no doubt they were truly magical, and bewitchingly beautiful.

Full of this enlightened notion, he communicated his suspicions to the rest of the Solomons, his associates, who, one and all, in the Prussian language, declared themselves of the same opinion.

In consequence of this determination, the conjurer, as they called him, was interrogated, who begged hard to have his clothes before he answered, which with some dif-

ficulty was granted, save only his shirt and stockings, which had vanished, without the supernatural aid of magic, along with his other property. When dressed, he took all the pains he could to convince them of the nature of the subject which had so much alarmed them; but no sooner did he mention the Virgin Mother, surrounded by a group of angels, than they all declared him a cursed jesuit, ten times worse, if possible, than a conjurer, or even Lucifer himself; and instantly dismissed him and his popish bit of copper, consigning him to the care of a corporal's guard, in one of the worst tents in the camp.

In this situation, our hero passed a most uncomfortable night, his only consolation being in the possession of such a rare and exquisite production of one of the sweetest painters that ever adorned any age or country in the universe. The rumour of this late transaction soon spread throughout the camp, and our adventurer was looked upon by some as a conjurer, and by others as a spy. In the former of these capacities, he was even consulted by a trum-

peter and a serjeant, respecting the continence of the wife of one, and the sweet-heart of the other; and had our fortune-teller been at the pains of turning their credulity to his own advantage, he would have found his account in so doing. But although in their power, he could not help reproaching them for their stupid ignorance in the most sarcastic manner, not even sparing their officers; which humour of his had nearly brought him to the halberts.

In a few days, they were joined by a regiment of infantry, and, with the newcomers, arrived an order for the whole to move forward with the utmost expedition, towards the territories of their high migh-tinesses, where considerable disturbances had been fomented by a set of madmen, calling themselves patriots. And who, in the height of their furor, had threatened their lawful sovereign, the prince stadt-holder, and to relieve whom from such pests, his Prussian majesty had detached a certain number of his chosen troops, commanded by a veteran duke, renowned for the thunder of his—manifestoes; which

was attended with a considerable saying of gunpowder. These gallant warriors, under such a captain, could not fail of bringing the rabble of herring-mongers and fish-fags to their duty and obedience. Accordingly these forces, to whom our hero was prisoner, struck their tents, and, breaking up their camp, marched for the Dutch provinces, with the greatest expedition.

After the second day's march, our adventurer underwent another examination, the consequence of which was, an offer to enlist him to serve in what was considered by all as a bloodless expedition; and seeing no remedy from confinement, and other scurvy usage, but this, he e'en made a virtue of necessity, and forthwith consented. He was accordingly enrolled in the regiment of Brunswick dragoons, by a detachment of which he had been made prisoner, and stripped nearly of his all, a few days previous, as before related.

During the remainder of the march, the principal object of his care, the divine picture, was secured in his cloak-bag, and he

never failed of paying his devotion to it on every occasional opportunity ; as upon this one valuable article depended all his hopes of future fortune. But the fatal day upon which they entered one of the United Provinces was productive of an accident, which completely frustrated all the golden prospects of our unfortunate adventurer. For as the squadron to which our hero belonged was proceeding, according to orders, to enter a village near Rotterdam, whether through weariness, or want of proper feeding, is not known, but the charger our adventurer rode came down with him. By which accident he had the misfortune to break his left arm ; and, being thus rendered unfit for duty for some time, he remained behind at a little village near, where the surgeon of the regiment, after setting his arm, procured him the best accommodations he could ; for which act of care and humanity, he received the fervent prayers of our maimed hero.

Being thus left behind, in a crippled forlorn state, after remaining in bed four or five days, nearly in one position, agreeably

to the surgeon's direction, in which situation he endured considerable pain, like a true soldier, without a single murmur. But after some time, when he had got upon his feet, his first care was to visit the depositary of all he depended upon now in the world ; when, lo ! the foundation of all his future schemes of ambition was removed, and the superstructure of all his towering views crumbled into ruin, and dissolved in smoke, which, " like the baseless fabric of a vision, left not a wreck behind."

By this stroke of adverse fortune our adventurer was reduced to the last stage of human wretchedness ; his understanding became deranged, and but for the humanity of the poor cottagers where he lay, would have certainly destroyed himself, which act of desperation he had several times attempted. In this dreadful situation, we feel some repugnance in being compelled, like the majority of worldly friends, to abandon an old acquaintance in distress ; and that, in being obliged to attend the progress of the principal subject of our Memoirs, it must be some time before we can

possibly pay our respects, according to our feelings and pity for fallen greatness.

The doctor or surgeon of the regiment, who had removed the object of our hero's anxiety, lest it should retard his cure, perhaps, or for some other laudable motive, had acquired, whilst a prisoner in France, a little more knowledge of the arts in general, than any of his comrades in arms. He, therefore, no sooner heard the story of the conjuror, and his magic bit of copper, than he longed for a sight, if not the entire possession of it; and no opportunity had offered, till the accident before related produced one. He was determined, therefore, not to let it slip; and as soon as his patient's arm was set, he saw, and was so bewitched with the sight of the magic touches of the fascinating picture, that he could not possibly get rid of it, till he arrived at Rotterdam; where a hundred gilders, properly applied by a Dutch professor of picturecraft, instantly dissolved the magic charm, and the enchanting Virgin Picture was now, for the first time,

contaminated by the touch of a professed dealer.

The distracted state of affairs throughout Holland, at that period, prevented the dealer from seeking an immediate purchaser; he therefore deposited it, with several other cabinet gems of much inferior merit, in a small room adjoining to where he slept. But in this dealer's hands, who was one of the few that knew its value, and would have treated it accordingly, it was doomed not to remain long; for he being strongly touched with the democratic mania, and the Orange party becoming triumphant, he had just sufficient notice given him to make his escape with his life; and, for the honour of modern friendship, which in this instance the most violent party prejudice was not able to destroy, or even vitiate, this notice was given him by his friend, who was a violent partizan of the house of Orange.

In the house of this patriotic ninny, as well as in several others, many of the Prussian troops were quartered; and they did

not fail, upon this occasion, to evince their zeal for the Orange cause, by the exactions and other severities they daily practised upon the enemies of that illustrious house. Amongst other secret places in the said dealer's house, they discovered the sanctum sanctorum, where all that was more than treasure to the expatriated owner was deposited, the whole of which they immediately sacrificed for what price they could get; and, amongst the precious wreck, was our divine subject—"The Virgin, surrounded by a group of angels," painted by the immortal Guido.

CHAP. XIII.

THE PICTURE IS PURCHASED BY A BURGOMASTER—IS SHUT UP IN A FILTHY DARK REPOSITORY, UNDER THE STAIRS, FOR OIL, CANDLES, AND OTHER RUEBISH OF A CHANDLER'S SHOP, AMONGST SHOE-BRUSHES AND BLACKING-BALL—CONDUCT OF TWO BRITISH DEALERS—THEY PURCHASE ALL THE PICTURES OF THE BURGOMASTER, BUT THE RIGHT ONE, &c.

THE pictures thus discovered by the Prussians were of course to them of very little consequence; they were glad, therefore, of finding a customer in any indifferent person who was inclined to purchase, at his own price, things to them of such trifling consideration: and amongst their buyers, one very conscientious burgomaster liberally afforded them twenty gilders for what he thought six of his country-

man's pictures, worth at least two thousand; and of that number thus cheaply purchased, the unfortunate offspring of the immortal Guido's divine pencil was one.

The present owner of this truly legitimate child of the great Italian master was one of those general dealers that trade in any species of merchandise where there is the least probability of gain; and having, through the channel of the existing troubles of his country, contrived to amass considerable sums, had no objection to speculate in an article of luxury at a small risk, which might produce two or three hundred per cent. In every other point of view, the productions of Guido, or of Raphael, were as completely indifferent to him as the painted monsters that adorned the stern of his dogger, then moored in the Texel.

Being now master of six fine pictures, the frames of five of which were oak, well carved and gilt, of course more immediately within the extent of his judgment, and certainly cost four times the money he

gave for the pictures and all ; he therefore consigned our masterpiece of the art, because naked and without a frame, to a dark and gloomy prison. In this dungeon, under the stairs, where oil for the lamps, soap and candles, birch-brooms, and other rubbish were kept, fit enough to stock a chandler's shop—here, alas ! upon a shelf, amongst shoe-brushes and blacking-ball, was carelessly thrown one of the most exquisite gems ever seen in Europe ! A jewel that had been accustomed to receive the daily homage of the noblesse, of female beauty, and the most splendid talents that graced the first and most polished court in the universe.

We shall here forbear to interrupt the thread of our narrative, by those dismal reflections which so gloomily crowd and obtrude upon our mind, with respect to the calamitous vicissitudes that have occurred in this sublunary vale of uncertain grandeur and abasement, since the removal of our subject from the gallery of the Louvre.

We say, then, in the mean and con-

temptible prison such as we have before described, our picture remained for the space of several months ; and in all probability might have remained there still; but for a circumstance which occurred about that time, which procured its liberation, and subsequent adventures.

After the troubles had subsided, and the Stadholderian party became once more masters, and dispensers of justice, things soon began to roll on in their old former orderly channel of regular society. A vast number of strangers began in consequence to flock thither, and all the great trading towns in the United Provinces became the depositaries of a great influx of people and of property. Amongst the number of strangers which curiosity and speculation had drawn to Rotterdam, were two or three opulent professors of picturecraft, or as they stiled themselves agreeably to the spirit of trade and language of the place, picture-merchants. These bipeds, and several others of the honourable fraternity, never fail, like the amphibious marauders on the coast of Cornwall, of visiting every

wreck, as soon as the storm which has caused the devastation ceases.

We have already furnished our readers with one of many instances of the wreck and dispersion of collections of fine pictures, in the case of the patriotic dealer's cabinet gems being sacrificed by the ignorance and cupidity of the Prussian soldiery. Indeed, the dreadful revolutionary storms seldom fail of depriving individuals, either of one party or the other, of such valuable curiosities as none of the ordinary or common events would ever divest them of. So in like manner do these voracious sharks, keen as their brethren of Cornwall, constantly attend the effects of such general havoc, in expectation of carrying away something valuable from the number of wrecks caused by these revolutionary hurricanes.

Now it is well known, that no tradesmen upon earth better understand how, and when to make the best market of a customer, than the people of Holland: and whenever they can discover an eagerness in their pur-

chaser for their article, their demand is sure to be in proportion to the avidity he betrays for possessing such commodities. This disposition was fully evinced at the various picture-sales, by auction, and private contract, which took place soon after tranquillity had been restored in the various great towns throughout the Provinces.

At one of these picture-auctions, our cunning burgomaster, the unworthy possessor of our divine picture, happened by chance to drop in, and hearing the immense prices offered for several pictures, none of which appeared to be any better framed, or larger than those he purchased of the Prussians; he was induced to wait till the sale was over, having previously remarked who were the principal buyers. Amongst the numbers that were apparently so, two of our British dealers happened to be real bona fide purchasers, and to them, mynheer addressed himself in French, and in high and low German, and Dutch. But they as little understood him, as if he had spoken to them in the Greek, Hebrew, or Arabic tongues. This difficulty,

however, was but of short duration; an Irish adventurer who happened, like several others of his countrymen, to be master of more tongues than gilders, explained to his fellow subjects what the mynheer said, which was merely to assure them, that he had much better bargains to dispose of than any they had bought, or could buy at the sale, by forty per cent. This was no sooner communicated, than they gave the mynheer to understand, through the medium of the hibernian interpreter, that they would be glad to accompany him home, and they all sat off thither in company.

Now as this voluntary interpreter was equally a stranger to both parties, he appeared a very necessary umpire between his countrymen and mynheer. The latter, however, wisely judging from his own ideas of commerce, that interest is the ruling principle in all cases, and with all men, was by no means uneasy at the conversation of the three Britons being in a language he did not know, and in fact, cared nothing about; and, therefore, took the first opportunity he could to intimate, in his own language, the

necessary overtures to engage the interpreter in his interest. But with all his prudent cunning upon this occasion, he applied rather too late, the amor patria, in all probability, having a very considerable bias upon the occasion.

In short, as they proceeded to mynheer's, the interpreter had agreed with his countrymen to sound the Dutchman, provided they liked his articles, which, by a few questions put by them, and explained in a very cautious and seemingly indifferent manner by the hibernian, they were enabled to ascertain one very important fact; namely, that mynheer was totally ignorant of the only craft they could have mentioned in the vast circle of human chicane, or the cunning legerdemain of industrious traffic, to wit—Picturecraft. They had scarcely adjusted the necessary preliminaries with the interpreter, when they reached the burgomaster's house, who lost no time in shewing them into a very handsome room, where his five pictures hung in beautiful shewy French frames.

The dealers having examined these productions with inward satisfaction, but with all the external marks of critical indifference, which is one of the laudable arts of the craft, whenever they mean to buy, asked, through their interpreter, the owner's price. And now again, the mynheer told the hibernian, what he had to expect if he would but hint how far his countrymen liked them. The answer he received was worthy of the ingenuous trio—that they were willing to agree with him for the frames, which they thought of ten times more value than the pictures, and desired he might set his price upon them, and leave the pictures intirely out the question. This stroke was more than honest mynheer was prepared for, and as they now appeared quite indifferent about any thing but the frames, in this early stage of the bargain, the Dutchman demanded only sixty gilders apiece for them. This offer they refused with some marks of surprize, alledging the smallness of the size; when the honest borgomaster, by the way of reconciling them to his price, declared they should have pictures and all into the bargain. And to

this generous sacrifice they with much seeming reluctance, at length agreed. The money was instantly paid, and the fortunate trio carried off the pictures in triumph, to the eternal credit of British genius over low Dutch cunning.

Having deposited their treasure safely at one of the dealer's lodgings, they adjourned to a tavern where the generous professors regaled their interpreter with an elegant dinner and abundance of the best French wine, and after sacrificing to the jolly god, they withdrew at a late hour to their respective lodgings. Next morning, the interpreter with a friend, whose name was Glazetint, called upon his new partners and countrymen, and asking to see their bargain, his friend, who happened to be a painter of very uncommon talents, exclaimed in a transport:—"Gentlemens, I will sure you vive hunder dueats vor your bargain, mit your like do keep de fram in velicome and better as dat." And then congratulated his friend on being so fortunately included as a partner in so capital a chop.

The dealers thanked him very politely for his liberal offer, and so did the interpreter; and after some general conversation irrelevant to the craft, he made his bow and wished them a good day, leaving his friend the hibernian behind. Immediately upon his departure, the interpreter declared his intention of setting out for Paris next day, and begged they would allow him what sum they thought proper for his share, as in the event of their not finding an immediate market, he thought it but fair they should indemnify themselves for any probable delay. In fact, he left it entirely to their honour, and whatever proportion they might think adequate to his share, he would accept of without a murmur or hesitation.

During this address, short as it was, the professors exhibited many signs of amazement, and both in a breath declared they were at a loss to comprehend his meaning: positively averring, that what they meant all along by the word share, was no more than the share of a good dinner as long as he and they remained in Rotterdam.

dam, and all their wonder was, how he possibly could mistake this, their obvious meaning. The hibernian, who had witnessed their merit in acting and counterfeiting a few of the passions, gave them to understand that so gross and palpable an evasion was an insult upon the understanding of a bumpkin; and therefore concluded that they had a mind to amuse themselves at his expence. But they still continued to persist in what the irritated hibernian called a shuffling falsehood; upon which a violent altercation ensued; and although the odds were two to one against him in the way of staunch evidence, he was resolved to seek immediate redress.

Being convinced by something in his manner, that in this instance at least there was little chance of his being worse than his word, and certain difficulties presenting consequences neither agreeable nor safe, they thought it better to compromise than to litigate a matter where the issue was rather uncertain at best. Agreeably to this determination they begged him to listen with patience to a proposal which he

should acknowledge to be fair; namely, to receive four hundred gilders down, and a promissory note, upon the simple condition of giving him the remainder of his third part of the profit, whenever any two arbitrators fairly chosen should decide, that he had a right to such a third share.

To this proposal, for two very prudential reasons, the hibernian thought proper to agree; the first was that he did not exactly know where else to get four hundred gilders; and the other, that bringing the question to any legal issue would involve more time than he could possibly wait.

Matters being thus settled, the hibernian adventurer received the money and note, set off for Paris, and with but a very poor opinion of his brother Britons; and as to the article of honour which is sometimes said to exist even among thieves; so thorough a contempt had he imbibed for all traffic, that he could not afford them a scruple of this ingredient, which is the basis of union even amongst pickpockets. Deeming a tradesman as completely below the influ-

ence of that polite principle, which he thought should never descend lower than from a gentleman to those, who at least have the appearance of being such.

We need scarcely here apprise our readers of a secret which they must have discovered before, from several hints; namely, that there was a positive agreement proceeding from their own offer to the interpreter, of a third share for his trouble in the negotiation, provided they made a purchase, and if they did not agree, share of a dinner and wine was all he had to expect. Now, as it was clearly their interest to recollect only the latter part of the conversation, and the former part of the agreement being a matter merely binding with men of honour, and having no pretensions to any such romantic character, they held themselves completely exonerated from fulfilling any condition so contrary to the custom and general usages of picturescraft. From these premises it will appear, that the compromise already mentioned was the result of prudence, arising from a constitutional an-

tipathy to every thing that savoured of litigation.

This affair being thus terminated to their satisfaction, they determined to apply to the burgomaster for some more of the fine frames, regretting their not having made the enquiry at the first interview, when their interpreter could have been of so much service.

On their way to the Dutchman's house they met Mr. Glazetint, the painter, who had been introduced to them by the hibernian, just coming from the repository of all their greedy expectations, with something in the shape of a picture, folded up in a silk handkerchief under his arm.. This he told them he had been fortunate enough to purchase just then of the burgomaster for a mere trifle ; adding, that it was worth twice the sum at least of all their five, although naked and without a fine frame. Their anxiety to behold so valuable a morceau had nearly stifled their chagrin at missing such a bargain, and almost put it out

of their heads to proceed in search of more; when the painter took his leave after inviting them to dine with him at his own house, when they should be indulged with a sight of the inestimable gem he was carrying home. So saying, he ran off as nimbly as a deer, highly elated with his success; and they proceeded to mynheer's dwelling, hard by, whom they found at home rejoicing in having found so good a customer for what he considered as of nothing like the value of any one of the five he had sold to the "Onglesmons."

This piece of good news he was telling a countryman of his, who happened to call in, just after the painter had carried off his prize, about a freight to London, where he had often been as a skipper of a galliot, and had picked up sufficient Onglese, in which he could drive a bargain with any Levite in Duke's Place. Our picture-merchants having by signs endeavoured to inform the burgomaster of the purport of this second visit, that respectable citizen spoke to his countryman the skipper, and the honest seaman soon convinced them of the truth

of the painter's having made a purchase of the only remaining picture in his friend's possession.

And having added by way of triumph the extraordinary sum he received for such an inferior article, blamed the precipitation of his friend in parting with the former pictures upon such easy terms. The burgo-master, however, was so full of the joke by which he had gained so much above his expectation, that he must needs desire his friend to relate the circumstances of the bargain, which he did while mynheer pro-
cured a lighted candle; when beckoning them to follow, he shewed them the gloomy prison where the dirty bit of copper lay, as before described, concluding with a grim, that he verily believed the fool mistook it for gold; as he several times weighed it upon the palm of his hand, as people are wont to do, who are about to guess at the value of any thing sold by weight.

Being now sufficiently convinced of their error, they withdrew in dudgeon, cursing the stupidity of their own neglect, and

racking their imagination with the immensity of profit that must result from a purchase in which they could have no share.

We shall now leave these two eminent picture-merchants to chew the cud of disappointment, by the way of blunting the keenness of their appetite for dinner, and take a view of the painter contemplating his purchase in all the luxury of mental and professional enthusiastic enjoyment. But as there is no possibility of conveying an adequate idea of the mental treat of a true amateur when contemplating a real bijou, to any but a person under the influence and dominion of the bewitching picture-mania; we shall only observe, that the difference of pleasure arising from an ignorant infatuation for this divine art of painting, and a well-regulated and judicious taste, is so nearly alike, that all the advantage derived by persons possessing the latter may be included in the permanence of its duration, as will be abundantly exemplified in the subsequent pages of this important history.

Our enthusiastic painter, who, by the time his guests were announced, had but just taken what he called a transient glance of the tout ensemble of this uncommon chef d'œuvre; the inspection of the outline, the various tints, the casts of the drapery, disposition of the group of angels, but, above all, the divine expression in the countenance of the immaculate Virgin and her heavenly attendants, were reserved for times more appropriate to such a sacred and ravishing investigation. Descending now from considerations of such sublime importance, our knight of the palette welcomed his visitors with an easy politeness, which most artists are very easy about, and therefore seldom at the pains of acquiring; and after some general conversation, the subject which led to the invitation was eagerly broached by his impatient guests. In fact, their curiosity for some time got the better of their appetite, and their eagerness was so pressing, that their gentlemanly host was in some measure compelled to gratify them by exhibiting his phenomena of the art before dinner. But, eh! genius of

Apelles ! Soul of the energetic and sublime Buonarotti ! What were the feelings of this genuine son of the art, when he beheld the placid unmeaning countenances of contented ignorance, gaping vacantly over the inimitable beauties of the heaven-born offspring of the inspired and immortal Guido ?

In short, his surprise at their ignorance quickly gave place to another very different emotion, when they both expressed their concern at his mistake, in having purchased a copy of the celebrated picture in the king of France's collection ; a print from which (having never before seen the original) enabled them to pronounce, with such authority, upon the spurious identity of what they stiled an humble imitation. We say, his surprise at their want of feeling soon gave way to his indignation at their confident effrontery ; and had not this latter sentiment been subdued by his politeness and hospitality, which softened down all his resentment into a sort of pitiable contempt, there is no knowing how far his passion, being a very young man, might

have trespassed on the rights of social fellowship and friendly habits.

He therefore, after a severe effort, withdrew the subject of such unmerited and gothic censure ; and laying it safely by in his painting-room, was determined never more to prostitute such excellence to the view of self-opinionated, ignorant plebeians of any country.



CHAP. XIV.

MR. GLAZETINT, THE FLEMISH PAINTER,
PLEASED WITH THE DEPARTURE OF HIS
GUESTS—RECEIVES GREAT CONSOLATION
FROM THE FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE OF
A CELEBRATED ENGLISH ARTIST, THEN
UPON HIS TRAVELS, BY WHOM HE IS
MADE AMPLE AMENDS FOR THE IGNO-
RANCE OF HIS PRESUMPTUOUS COUNTRY-
MEN—THEY SEND OFF A CARGO OF GEMS
FOR ENGLAND, WHICH HAD BEEN ABSENT
FROM THEIR NATIVE PLACE THIRTY
YEARS, AND FOLLOW FOR THE PRESER-
VATION OF SUCH PRECIOUS ARTICLES—
WITH OTHER CURIOUS MATTERS.

IT may be easily conceived, how very irk-
some the remainder of the stay of such pre-
tenders must have been to a young man of
their entertainer's talent and liberal ideas;

being really an artist of the first-rate abilities in his line; and who by travel and observation had acquired all those polite exterior advantages which can never be acquired by any other means than an intercourse with the most polished circles of all countries. In fact, these advantages, added to a very handsome person, were the causes of involving Mr. Glazetint in an amour which unfortunately cost him his life, as shall be our melancholy task to relate in its proper place.

The termination of a visit, which commenced so inauspiciously as did that of our professors, was therefore to their liberal host the most pleasing part of the whole entertainment.

In a few days, however, he met with ample compensation for his disappointment with our picture-dealers, in the admiration of one of our most esteemed English artists, who to the most profound knowledge of his profession added all the politeness of a gentleman and a liberal scholar. In short, no two hermits could be more constant in their daily worship, at the shrine of some pa-

tron saint, than were these kindred geniuses of the pencil at their devotion to the hallowed production of their long-departed brother. The English artist, by permission of his friend, made several sketches from various parts of it, and one entire copy, in oil, which he preserved as a study sacred to friendship and the arts, to the day of his death. During the remainder of his stay in the United Provinces, the Flemish painter conversed with him daily, and a firm and lasting esteem was the consequence, which the former never failed to express for the memory of the latter till the final termination of his mortal existence, which was many years after the melancholy news of the unfortunate Glazetint's death was confirmed in England.

Soon after our picture-dealers had exhibited the uncommon proof of their knowledge before the Flemish artist, already related, they set off for their own country, sending before them a large cargo of precious materials for the advancement of picturecraft, not a few of which had been absent more than thirty years from their

own country, and then found their way back, thus mellowed and improved by the maturing hand of time, and the magic tints acquired by a continental airing.

More than a twelvemonth rolled on to the perfect satisfaction of the Holy Virgin and her angelic attendants, and as this sacred gem received the daily adoration of its present possessor, as well as the occasional devotion of all the amateurs within the circle of his acquaintance; its situation was not much less enviable than when it received the homage of all the great visitors at its former dwelling, in the gallery of the Louvre.

During the period it remained in our painter's possession, many were the tempting offers he refused from persons who were well acquainted with its intrinsic merit; having admired it in its former splendid residence, from whence the circumstance of its removal began now to be pretty generally known. And there was a very sanguine *Hope* in Amsterdam about

that time, that its future residence would finally settle in a celebrated collection near that opulent city. We have said that our painter had resisted the temptation of frequent golden offers for this object of his daily devotion; and we are now grieved to relate, that hard, iron-handed necessity, at length compelled him to yield what was in some measure as dear to him as life. But having for a considerable time exerted all his talents to produce such a copy as might in some measure console him for the loss of the divine original, he succeeded so happily in two out of five, all done within a twelvemonth, that he frequently shewed them to his friends the connoisseurs, at different intervals, as the original.

As he had taken uncommon pains in cleaning his jewel, and in reducing the two favourite copies to the same general mellowness of tone, imitating every scratch and mark on the back of the copper of each of his performances, well knowing the general reverence of some judges to that side of an undoubted picture for the removal of their tender scruples. We say, after all these

pains, there need be little wonder that the deception was completely successful; and that to this day, though the facts here related are said to be well known to many living witnesses, the three celebrated gems are, one each, now in the possession of as many different connoisseurs, in as many countries: and that each of these amateurs conceives himself the envied possessor of the *chef d'œuvre* of the immortal Guido.— But which is really so, we have no doubt our readers, after a careful perusal of these three volumes, will be enabled with some degree of certainty to determine.

We shall now, for certain reasons connected with the subsequent pages of our Memoirs, acquaint the curious reader, that the picture-merchants, who had more than a twelvemonth before so disdainfully treated this phœnomenon of the arts, finding their account in a trip to Holland and Flanders, returned thither with very different ideas of the merit of our picture to what they exhibited when gratified with a sight of it before their departure. For before their arrival in England then, Fame,

or some of his noisy associates and agents, had spread the merit of the little Guido gem throughout the whole phalanx of connoisseurs, artists, amateurs, and dealers. Nay it was the general whisper of that day, which happened to be loud enough to reach the ears of several worthy members of the picturecraft, that our then minister had received a letter upon the subject of the theft from the ——— then premier of France,

Now whether they really conceived of us then, what has boldly been asserted since, by a celebrated ci-devant orator, in his eloquent philippic against Old England, yclept Barrere, that, as a nation of shop-keeping usurers, we might be led to sanction, or at least wink at, the inferior art of thieving, we cannot here precisely ascertain. Or whether that general continental prejudice had obtained any credit or influence over the French minister's mind, which reproaches us with our country's being the human slaughter-house of Europe from the number of petty, and other thieves executed annually amongst us, we cannot determine. Though we must acknowledge, that these

legal butcheries, at a shocking first view, may sanction that disgraceful character so often the theme of reproach amongst our enemies. From which it follows, that the art of thieving is reduced to a stubborn science among us, for which there is no other remedy but hanging; and consequently the receivers, without whom there would be no thieves, are equally culpable, though their punishment be far more lenient. But, perhaps, a very elaborate publication, which appeared about the time of Barrere's abusive declamation, might have encouraged that flippant orator in his description of us. Wherein the author, and he a grave magistrate too, calculates the annual depredations on one of our rivers to amount to such a sum, as would, if reduced to French livrés, sound very respectably as a principal item in the flourishing *éposé* of their present national revenue. And as for his other calculations respecting our courtesans, the number of them, and a variety of predators of every possible description therein enumerated, if deducted from the remainder of our population, would leave a balance so trifling on the side of female vir-

tue or manly honesty; as to make us blush for the one, and be dumb-founded for the other.

How far these conjectures may, or may not be applicable, we shall not presume to decide; but certain it is, that our court was the only one applied to respecting the said theft. But we, to whom our country is more dear than the vital stream that nourishes each artery of our throbbing heart, would fain repel the calumnious charge, and hurl with contempt an answer fraught with all the dignity of insulted truth at the shameless perverters of it. And here, ye wretched titled beggars, the wealth of whose whole principalities hold out no greater temptation to the eye of a covetous thief than the dazzling wealth of a single goldsmith and jeweller's shop in the numerous streets of our imperial city, which hath thus excited your envy. We say, the security of such beggarly possessions is more to be attributed to their radical poverty, than to the native virtue of the inhabitants, whose greedy optics

can discover nothing in them worth the risk even of *their* slavish necks.

But to return from this digression, inspired by the true amor patria, we shall only observe, what use was made even of a copy of the original letter written by the minister of France, to ours, upon the subject of the theft already mentioned in various pages of these Memoirs. For, upon a late auctioneering occasion, we recollect, and are proud to remark upon the well-timed use made of the said letter, and which reflected no small degree of credit upon the sagacity and penetration of the only second, we can mention to the celebrated Pall-Mall commissioned orator. Nor can we imagine any master-stroke in the whole annals of the profession that was more productive to the proprietors, than this *White-puff*, which lifted, or raised the lot from 700 to 950 guineas in less than ten minutes.

The return of our picture-merchants to the continent, and particularly to Rotter-

dam, we can here assure our readers, was connected with circumstances more certain in their issue than a journey of mere curiosity, or random speculation. For having communicated what they saw, whilst abroad, to a nobleman whose situation at court enabled him to be first in his enquiries about the poor fugitive offspring of the divine Guido, he was convinced, from their description, and the story attached to it, of the picture they had seen in their journey being the identical gem, the loss of which had caused so many fruitless enquiries.

For once in the lives of these illustrious professors, be it here recorded, they spoke as if by accident the truth, and only concealed that part of it which the nobleman, in that stage of the business, should have nothing to do with; namely, where, and with whom they had seen the treasure he was so anxious to obtain. From this prudent reservation they obtained a commission of the nobleman to purchase the said jewel, at any price within the liberal bounds of one thousand three hundred guineas, and a hand-

some compliment for their trouble; together with a remuneration of all their expences. Now, although it ill becomes the generality of persons to censure their betters, it is the peculiar and indispensable province of all just biographers to assert the truth; and as facts are to them a sort of text, from which they should never depart, but for the purpose of explaining certain motives which have led to the exposition of such facts; so are we obliged, from a rigid adherence to our text, to declare, before all whom it may concern, that the motives of the said nobleman were directed solely to his own gratification, in possessing a stolen jewel of such esteem and celebrity. And that the smallest intention of ever restoring it to its regal owner, never once entered the capacious mind of the right honourable personage from whom our conscientious dealers received their commission.

We have already acquainted our readers, that the Flemish artist had been compelled by dire necessity to part with his idol gem, previous to the second arrival of the said in-

distrious picture-dealers at Rotterdam. They of course lost no time, upon their arrival there again, of paying their respects to an artist possessed of such a treasure, and which was now become the chief object of their journey. It would give us pain to relate the many supple and degrading arts they had recourse to, in order to sound the painter with respect to his circumstances, and his intentions about the disposal of what they knew he worshipped. They last of all attacked him in a quarter where few mortals are invulnerable, much less so artists, and men of science. In fact, they not only lavished the most fulsome praise upon every picture of his own production ; but, to convince him of their sincerity, purchased several cabinet morceaus, for which he made them pay liberally.

At length, after several interviews, they casually mentioned a little picture on copper, that he once politely shewed them in their former excursion. This produced a dealing scene, in which the actors were all perfect in their several parts, and the utmost efforts of the art of picturecraft were

displayed in cunning perfection. The whole of which concluded with the usual farce of their offering something more than half of what they meant really to give, and then they made their exit for that day.

After several repetitions of the same piece, the bargain was at length concluded at seven hundred and fifty ducats; and one of the closest resemblances ever produced became the property of the two fortunate purchasers. In short, so great was the mutual satisfaction of both parties upon the occasion, that they seldom dined asunder for several days, and at length parted with equal pleasure, each being heartily glad to be rid of the other. The dealers imposing a solemn promise of secrecy upon the painter respecting the price, to which he likewise enjoined them; and as both had their reasons for being sincere, the matter might have remained a secret for many ages yet to come, but for these veritable Memoirs.

The professors quickly departed with their prize for their native soil, and the painter

proceeded soon after with the twin-jewel of that prize, upon a rambling excursion, intending before his return to Rotterdam to visit the court of Spain, also that of the meretricious and munificent Catherine, empress of all the Russias, who was then making a grand collection to amuse the intervals of dalliance graciously permitted to her fond slaves.

But lest any ill-natured critic should here imagine, that in what we have related of the deception practised upon the two picture-dealers, we meant the least reflection on the judgment of such eminent persons as are generally denominated dealers; we take this opportunity of declaring, and utterly disclaiming all and every partial allusion. Being confident, from our own experience, that the whole, and every individual one of that respectable profession, are liable to a similar mistake; and that many waggish artists have long been in the practice of deceiving us into a confession of their neglected merit, by imposing their own labours upon us for the production of

of the great masters of yore, for whom we profess the greatest admiration. Of these, and some other (not very orthodox opinions, we confess), to our readers we hold ourselves pledged, to adduce such facts; however, in support of, as shall be deemed by all unprejudiced persons nothing less than conclusive.

But to proceed with our narrative—These two worthy friends and labourers in the vineyard of picturecraft, on their passage home, happened to disagree about some of the items in a bill of expences, which their noble employer was to discharge agreeably to his bargain. This sort of dispute will appear the more extraordinary, as the difference which caused it did not amount to ten pounds, whereas they never descended to a moment's contention about fixing the profit upon the picture, though it amounted to more than four hundred guineas each. And this they perfectly agreed was the most moderate of all reasonable profits, being within the bounds and extent of their commission, which they considered as narrow

enough for men of their extensive capacity, to be limited to.

It would be disgraceful to the profession, and therefore painful to our feelings, were we to relate the degree of bitterness with which they attacked each other. Indeed to such a pitch of frenzy had their animosity carried them, that if the frequent threats they uttered had been put in execution, the worst consequence must have attended it, not only to themselves, but the profession in general. And these threats were no less dreadful—we tremble while we relate it—than to turn honest men, and impeach each other, for the benefit of a set of good natured gentlemen, whom they had long been in the habit of levying heavy contributions upon. And indeed to such a pitch had their rage carried them, that we verily believe, had the thing been possible, they certainly would have put these their cruel threats into execution. The dreadful consequences of which we shudder even to contemplate.

But, thank heaven, though such circum-

stances are sometimes recorded by freebooters of one another, no such odium has ever yet disgraced the worthy professors of picturecraft. And we here defy the whole tribe of biographers to produce amongst a host of the most rapacious Philistines a single parallel to several heroes whose deeds are recorded in this our veritable history.

They have, we must allow, presented us with some instances of great men, celebrated for their natural antipathy to truth, and others who felt the same kind of loathing towards that vulgar quality called honesty; and who were so fortunate as never to be in their lives known fairly convicted of having once practised either, except by mere accident. But we have to boast of the exclusive felicity of handing down to posterity a few noble instances of human perfection, whose heroic nature was never surprised by such an unmanly frailty as to speak truth, even by accident; or to degrade themselves for a moment with the practice of such a starving, beggarly virtue as honesty. It is with great satisfaction,

Therefore, we relate that nature and habit were at length triumphant, and the sudden ebullition of their choler had effectually subsided before these two great men landed at Harwich.

CHAP. XV.

THE TWO FRIENDLY DEALERS DROWN ALL ANIMOSITY UPON THEIR ARRIVAL AT HARWICH—HIRE POST-CHAISE FOR LONDON, AND SET OFF FULL SPEED—REFLECTION UPON THE CRUELTY OF OVER-DRIVING ROAD-HORSES—ONE OF THEM DROPS DEAD UPON THE ROAD, &c.

THE friends and partners having consigned all their anger to the winds and waves, determined upon their landing to drown all remembrance of such unprofitable animosities in the best wine the place could afford. Supper being over, and the third bottle opened, they were determined to turn all disputes into immediate profit; and therefore the paltry item of ten pounds, which had caused so disgraceful a quarrel, was instantly erased from the account current. After which, they by one of the

simpleat rules of the ingenious Cocker, namely, multiplying the said ten pounds by three, immediately substituted thirty in its place.

The next morning they hired post-chaise, and set off for London, with an expedition truly worthy of the humanity of those who boast of our superior mode of travelling, at the expence of torturing to death annually several of the noblest and most useful animals in our island. The liberality of our travellers, being communicated from one post-boy to another, did not fail to produce its usual effect upon such occasions; and nothing but a trifling accident could have impeded the remainder of their journey. This, however, was nothing more than the off-hand horse dropping down dead, just as they arrived within a few miles of the stage where they meant to take up their abode for the night. Although the chaise was overturned by the accident, the travellers felt no other inconvenience than what arose from their fears for the picture, which had fallen out, and by

some means had got under the chaise. The packing-case by this fall became broken, and they were alarmed for the damage their anxiety suggested the picture might have sustained. They were for the present, however, obliged to content themselves; for although it was dark, they had not above three miles to walk to the next stage. They accordingly agreed to march forward, carrying their portmanteau, and the picture by turns; while the post-boy followed slowly with the damaged chaise.

They had proceeded in this manner about three quarters of a mile on their short journey, when they were overtaken by a highwayman well mounted, who commanded them to stand and surrender upon pain of immediate death. With this peremptory summons they very prudently complied, and the collector ordered them to empty all the cash and valuables they had into his hat instantly, which he held out for that purpose. The consternation of our dealers at this unexpected attack, left them little room for deliberation; and they therefore prepared to comply with an injunction

backed with so formidable an argument as the muzzle of a horse pistol:

And here for the honour of the arts be it remembered, that the loss of the money, nay the fear of death itself, had not power to eradicate their anxiety for the safety of their invaluable picture. Whilst, therefore, one of the partners in the prize was emptying his purse into the highwayman's hat; the other stole to the side of the hedge, and deposited the small packing-case that contained the supposed Guido in the midst of it. The collector, who upon this occasion happened to be more unreasonably vigilant than is common to gentlemen of the road, having from the first kept his eye upon the small packing-case; from the booty he shrewdly guessed it might contain. For he thought, naturally enough, that its contents must be of some importance to induce them to carry it so far as the next stage was from the place where the accident happened, of which he received an account from the post-boy, in whose care they did not think proper to leave it. When, therefore, he had received what our

careful dealers chose to part with, the knight of the post demanded in a resolute tone what they had done with the small case he had just before seen. Now as it often happens, that what we are at the greatest pains to preserve, are by these very means destroyed; so it, in this instance, exactly fell out, and we have this case to add to the catalogue of a thousand others, which confirm the remark. For had our over-careful dealers saved themselves the trouble of hiding the small packing-case, this son of plunder would never have thought of encumbering himself with it.

It now became necessary to decide a question of the last importance, namely, whether they chose to surrender the picture upon which so much depended, or their lives; and after a short, but severe struggle, nature decided the point, and thus preserved the lives of two such valuable subjects. The case was accordingly delivered up, with which the highwayman rode off, leaving our disconsolate merchants to ruminate upon the uncertainty of all mundane

affairs: But however great their disappointment was, their despoiler felt scarcely any less; when arriving at his quarters, and tearing off the broken lid of the case, and finding nothing but a piece of painted copper therein, where his imagination had led him to expect diamonds of the greatest value. Finding nothing therefore to gratify his avarice, he flung this divine resemblance of the immortal Guido's picture under the grate, and retired to a night-house in the neighbourhood of ——, there, amongst his companions, he meant in spite of fortune to console himself for such a disappointment.

At this general rendezvous for the idle and profligate, an uncommon group of personages were wont to assemble for the general purpose of consuming that which in the end consumes all who are addicted to it, we mean ardent spirits, particularly our native gin. For retailing such destructive liquors, the said night-house had long been famous, for that term is indifferently applied to the imprudent quack, the judicious physician, the greatest general, and

the most notorious highwayman, all who cut a conspicuous figure on the great Theatre Royal of London, are dubbed *famous* by the good people of England. Amongst the eccentric group of characters thus assembled, was an itinerant portrait-painter, of good talents, yet without patronage, but who has since then obtained deserved celebrity. And as this genuine son of the palette was not more nice in the choice of his company than in that of his food or raiment, he was considered as an inoffensive brother, possessing every quality for a collector but one, which they, as well as many other natural philosophers, long considered as the chief of the cardinal virtues. And it is notorious, that this very essential ingredient of virtue, by universal consent, is called courage.

To this receptacle of the unfortunate brave, we haye said our gentleman of the road adjourned, on the same night of his exploit with the picture-dealers ; and, when the hour of confidence was come, related in bitter terms the disappointment he had experienced upon opening the small pack-

ing-case. Declaring with a monstrous oath, that he was blockhead enough to flatter himself it contained nothing but diamonds, and other articles of the greatest value.. To this, as our painter seemed to pay unusual attention, the rest of the company hinted to the captain, that in this particular service he might be of some use ; and one in the corner next the chimney, who had been groom to a very eminent face-painter, declared he had known his own master frequently give from twenty to thirty guineas for pictures much smaller than the one described by the captain. Aye, and continued he in an under tone of voice, as if in actual service and bound to keep his master's secrets—" These heresame tiny pictures has brought master more d'y see than a hundred a-piece ! for dammé, he was up to gammon, as sharp as any of us—Well, thought I, there's more anglers for flats than many folks thinks."

Another, that had been driver of the stage coach between Hampstead and London, upon the box of which the eccentric and celebrated George Morland had fre-

quently rode with him, confirmed his pal, the groom's story, swearing that it might turn out to be a picture of his friend Georgy, "and in that there case, he'd stand ten quid for it, if only a span long. For to his certain knowledge, a brother whip at Highgate, one Bob Belly, that kept the Bull, had made a pretty bit of a fortune out of Georgy's pictures and scoring, for Bob was a bit of a draftsman his-self d'y' see, and a dead rum-one in the chalk way! And ifs' a be I liked, I could mention pretty near a dozen more queer prigging coves, as well as that there saucy publican at Highgate, and nearly as little deserving it, and all a true bill, I say.—What cares I for a parcel of spunging swells?"

Enough had now been said to induce the collector to comply with the voice of the company, and return to his quarters, with a view of submitting his booty to the opinion of such competent judges. He went accordingly home, and raked out the sacred gem from its degraded situation amongst the ashes under the grate, where, in an angry fit of disappointment, he had

thrown it; and rejoined this company of distinguished connoisseurs. The instant he displayed it, the ci-devant driver of the Hainpstead stage, declared with an oath, "it was as much beneath the hand of his friend George, as a dogs'-meat neddy was to a blood horse. Georgy'd never bemean himself to paint such b—d outlandish, papish trumpery!—he's the boy for good old English pieces; his be the right sort—pigs, asses, sheep, or your cart-horses, mind ye—and as for true nature, your natty blowings, only look at Bet Sympson, that there gipsy, and her flash-man, cutting Tom's queer mug—and 'bove all, that there beautiful piece as Jess Blaze the chimney-sweeper offered so much for—there you see nat'ral as life—Tom Dicksy the nacker's whole family picking cinders at the gable end of his ram ken, at the bottom of Gray's Inn Lane. My eyes!—there's your mauleys—call this here painting? Look at that, I say—where hopping Sam's peering so queer at squinting Poll's dairies—my eyes! w'y ye talk of this here---lord, I woudn't gie ye half a taw-

ney for it, cap---woud' n't indeed if I'd
as many shrieves as would burst my reader."

But the groom, who loved a bit of antiquity, because his master never bought any thing modern, was of a very different opinion respecting the picture, and only wished himself able to appear with it at Sir Thomas's, or where he'd another Hope of placing it---“he'd warrant ten quid at least for it; without axing any thieving commission, like some hungry must-be-scragg'd auctioneers, that charge ye Solyman's interest, like a pawnbroker, whether they sell or no.” Our itinerant face-painter was now generally appealed to by these enlightened amateurs for his decision, being, as they all said, a professional man; and he modestly gave it as his opinion, that it was as fine a composition as any thing he'd ever seen, of even Sir Joshua's, and lamented his inability to purchase it, in very feeling terms. Declaring his fortune would be almost made were the picture his property. This declaration was answered by the captain with that promptness of generosity which has characterised more

than one of his dangerous profession. "Here, damn you, take it then, and forswear begging, and flattery-painting for the remainder of your life." Having thus given the poor painter what had nearly deprived him of utterance sufficient to thank his benefactor intelligibly, he hastily withdrew; and the remainder of the party kept it up, as usual, till daylight. When the painter departed, not to seek repose like many of the rest, nor yet in search of a breakfast; but what was quite as natural to a man in his situation, and that was, merely in search of a customer for his picture, upon the success of which depended both food and repose.

CHAP. XVI.

THE UNFORTUNATE PICTURE-DEALERS ARRIVE AT THE INN, AND INTERROGATE THE POST-BOY IN VAIN ABOUT THE ROBBERY—REMAIN TILL A FRESH SUPPLY OF CASH ARRIVES TO CARRY THEM TO LONDON—STEPS THERE TAKEN FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE PICTURE—THEIR RECEPTION AT THE NOBLEMAN'S WHO COMMISSIONED THEM TO BUY THE GEM, &c.

WE shall now return to our plundered dealers, who, notwithstanding their being eased of the burthen of all their cash, the packing-case and its much-lamented contents, jogged on as heavily as if they had been under the ponderous influence of a hundred weight each, till they arrived at their destined inn, when they had scarcely spirits enough left to ask for a glass of

brandy, which somewhat recruited them, and they related the circumstances of the robbery, as before mentioned. The post-boy arriving soon after, was interrogated by them ; but, as usual with most of the lads of the whip, denied all knowledge of the person of the freebooter ; declaring he could not swear to any feature of him *with a safe conscience* were he to meet him to-morrow.

Thus circumstanced, our travellers were obliged to digest their misfortunes as well as they could, and were also compelled to remain at the inn till the return of the post brought them a supply of cash to defray their expences to London, which journey they completed in one of the stages. Immediately upon their arrival, they advertised their loss in as cautious a way as possible, stating a few leading facts, and offering forty guineas reward to whoever brought the contents of a small packing-case, lost upon the road betwixt Harwich and London. Which was directed to be left at the bar of the City Coffee-house, Cheapside, where the above reward would be paid to whoever brought it, without

any enquiry about particulars ; this coffee-house being kept by the brother of one of the dealers, who was instructed to fulfil every tittle of the said advertisement, and that for obvious reasons. These and several other measures were taken for the recovery of the inestimable gem, without the desired effect ; and the unfortunate travellers having waited upon the nobleman who gave them the commission to purchase the picture, and told him their lamentable story, when they were laughed at for their comfort. And upon humble solicitation for their expences, were shown the outside of the door, with positive injunctions never to set foot in it more. Which latter part of the sentence, some ill-natured persons may say, if generally observed by the rest of the nobility and gentry of this capital, towards a select number of the picturecraft, many thousands would have been, and might still be saved for much better purposes, than for the support and encouragement of such ignorant, pampered impostors.

The portrait-painter, whom we left in search of a customer for the gem, the high-

wayman made him a present of, went as soon as it was prudent to wait upon some of the amateurs at the west end of the town, whose morning hours were devoted to the contemplation and study of virtù. Ad with a mind big in expectation, and elated with the brilliant prospect of golden independence, he arrived at one of these virtuoso's house, and made the whole neighbourhood ring with a triple application of the brazen knocker. Our artist hereupon was quickly admitted; and having stated his errand, received the mortifying intelligence that the gentleman had set off for his country seat in Berkshire the day before; which was in consequence of being disgusted with all the innocent fraternity of picturecraft, from the ingenious legerdemain of one of that respectable body, who had played off a most productive trick upon him. This manœuvre was practised upon the four first letters of the original gamut of musical persuasion, modernised agreeably to the time and manner of the celebrated minuet of Mons. De-la-Cour, and other successful musicians who have long played with success upon

the Cremona deletanti. These they call their whole and half-note supporters, namely, flats and naturals, their own key being always sharp, without whose harmonious aid their persuasive strains of musical eloquence would soon be *piano*, but never *de capo*.

This rich and comprehensive scale, called *gama*, or, according to the modern Greek etymon, *gammion*, consists entirely of the grand musical hum of persuasion, of which the following anecdote, before alluded to, is one of a thousand instances. The ingenious professor, who had long played first fiddle at the Berkshire squire's morning concerts, was a worthy disciple of a well-known German adept in the science of picturecraft. And having been sent for one morning to the squire's concert, was consulted as usual about a very fine picture, which the squire had in charge from a raw amateur the preceding day. The opinion of all the party, previous to the professor's arrival, was unanimous in favour of the picture being an original. But he quickly turned the scale in his own favour, by de-

claring it a copy of the inimitable Claude, painted by Patell, (which indeed was the truth,) and by that means persuaded the squire to change it with him for an inferior picture. Here the effect of persuasion was a mere piano strain; but in less than six months, he sold the squire his own picture, altered in several places for the worse; and, by the mere force of persuasion, imposed it upon him for an undoubted original, by that great and justly admired French master, Claude.

This effort of forte-persuasion the squire had completely detected, when too late to recover his money; and, in dudgeon for being thus played upon as a minor, he left town in desperate rage against the whole band of musical dealers, as before mentioned. The painter received these sad tidings with the utmost dejection, and went his way, poor devil, muttering execrations upon the whole tribe of fancy-merchants. And but for hard necessity, would have returned to his hovel in East-Smithfield, without a second effort to relieve or ameliorate his condition by the

sale of the picture. He now crossed Oxford Street and Cavendish Square, and perceiving a large house at the corner of one of the streets in that square, with a fine stone portico, he began to flatter himself that one *Hope*, at least, might be found by good fortune for him there. He accordingly made a more humble application at the door of this princely mansion than he did at the former, and was let in by a servant in livery. To this civil domestic he communicated his business, who, after some hesitation, very kindly agreed to carry the picture to his master, then just sat down to breakfast.

During the absence of this messenger of *Hope* and fear, our painter again relapsed into golden expectations, and began to flatter himself with agreeable prospects; which were soon blasted by the return of the obliging footman. He, in pitying accents, gave his master's compliments, who was sorry the gentleman troubled himself to call, as he had left off buying. Struck with this second disappointment in a *Hope* which appeared to him so well founded, he began

to give way to sullen despair; and in that temper of mind he bent his steps towards Portland Place, where several connoisseurs of undoubted taste and judgment then resided. The first application he made in this abode of wealth and grandeur, he met with one of those unmerited rebuffs which the indigent too often suffer from the insolence of pampered lackeys. A reptile of this description happening to be in the hall when our poor painter was let in, and hearing his business, desired to see the picture; which being complied with, the pert monkey began to ape his master, declaring it only fit to stop a hole in the pantry where the mice came through. And to complete this scene of indignity, after eyeing this resemblance of excellence with the utmost contempt, wondered who could have been so silly as to send such a daub for the inspection of his master; and then spit upon and abused this emblem of the Virgin, and the sacred chef d'œuvre of Guido.

At this last insult, the blood of our artist rose to such a pitch of choler, that he returned the insult by a direct and well-

pointed discharge of saliva in the varlet's face ; and opening the door, dared the miscreant to single combat. Which challenge the poltroon answered by shutting the ponderous door in the face of his enraged antagonist. As our ill-used artist proceeded along, he asked the first servant he met, whose house that was now, which he had just left, mentioning the name of its former owner. And was much surprised to hear it still belonged to the same squire, who was far more apt to discover a trivial defect in a picture, than the most glaring insolence of his favourite domestics.

Although bursting with ire, our painter was checked in his general invectives against the party-coloured tribe, by the civility of this member of the cloth, who took the pains of writing his name with a pencil upon a card, as a passport to the sentry of the next garrison. This recommendation, trivial as it may appear, was of great use to our poor distressed artist, who no sooner shewed it to the porter, upon his entrance at the door, than he was kindly invited down to the kitchen, where he was pressed

to partake of a luncheon. It being near twelve, and he not having yet broken his fast, many invitations were unnecessary; and he did his endeavour upon this occasion, to provide for the hungry contingencies of the day, by laying in a sufficient quantity at so favourable an opportunity.

He had moreover the consolation of being assured, that his picture should be first shewn as soon as their master's bell rang, though there were four left that morning for inspection previous to his, the owners of which were all strangers to the house. Thus fortified against the gripe of fasting, and the shafts of further disappointment, he waited an hour without much anxiety about the issue ; when the bell announced the commencement of the great man's ordeal. Our painter, according to promise, was introduced first, and as his picture was there before him, it insured a tolerable reception for its owner. "The design, composition, and drawing of this little jewel," said the judicious collector, without ever taking his eyes from off it, "are almost faultless, and certainly have much

of the Italian gusto ; but that sweet benignity of heavenly expression which denotes the hand of the immortal Guido is wanting here. Besides, the general tone of colouring has much more of the Flemish than the Roman gusto. Observe," said he, retiring a few paces back, " the want of force and harmony in the tout ensemble.—Look at the hardness of the drapery—None of that silky flowing gloss which characterizes all Guido's folds. In fact, sir, the cast of all the drapery betrays the timid hand of a servile copyist.—Besides, I look at the general eye of the picture, which informs me at a first glance.—Sir, it fails to strike you with that certain—that instant conviction, which always results from a first judicious view of the great Italian masters. I am sorry—but really I cannot bring myself to agree with you in the fact of its originality—for really the picture, considered merely as what it is, possesses uncommon merit ! Pray, sir, what may be the price?—Not that I want it—indeed the idea of a copy is rather hard to dismiss from one's mind ; it conveys a reflection upon a gentleman's taste. How-

ever—the price; be so good, sir, to recollect it is merely a copy."

Our painter modestly answered, he was perfectly convinced of its originality, and demanded two hundred guineas; for his luncheon, and the commanding air with which the great connoisseur decided every thing, made him lower his price three hundred guineas already; as he never, when he first started in the morning, had a doubt of being offered less than five hundred guineas for it by any person capable of appreciating its merit. So that in less than half an hour he was talked out of three hundred guineas. Moderate, however, as the present sum was, in his opinion, the connoisseur appeared stunned with the unusual sound, which had taken such possession of his organs of speech, that he did nothing for some moments but repeat the sum; and at every repetition his emphasis became more audibly terrific, insomuch that the poor painter wished himself fairly out of the house.

In this wish he was soon gratified, for

the great man rung his bell, and the servant appearing, he wished the poor harrassed painter good morning ; and as he was going down stairs, desired the man to tell him, when he recovered the use of his senses, and was disposed to receive ten guineas for his copy, that sum was at his service. At this our poor artist bit his lip in an agony ; but, believing the connoisseur more completely bereft of his senses than he hoped he should ever be, he took his route to the other side of the way, in hopes of meeting Fortune in a better humour when he turned his back upon these her ungrateful favourites. In this hope he applied to another rich man, very different from any of the former, an old friend, and truly worthy patron of the arts. Here he met with a very civil reception, and beheld an original, whose form was loveliness itself, and from whom he augured the most favourable event. But here, alas ! he was also deceived. The good old gentleman, who had long ceased to make use of his own optics, could behold nothing but through the medium of her languishing vision, which always decided upon such occasions. And our unfor-

tunate painter being so struck with admiration of her charms, had failed in paying that sort of respect for her consequence, which most ladies are very tenacious of exacting, while they hold a situation similar to our fair one's. A nod, therefore, of silent disapprobation from this beautiful arbitress of our painter's fate, left him the now helpless alternative of trying another, or relinquishing those dreams of wealth which had so recently elated him..

Again he wooed the fickle goddess, but still she remained unpropitious. And now his dernier resort, after several others had failed, was one who then was laid up with a violent fit of the gout; and thus every avenue, every door that opened to illusive success, was now shut against him.. In a state of mind truly pitiable, he reached his miserable habitation, rendered now more miserable to him than ever, from the numerous disappointments of the day; and, throwing himself upon a wretched straw mattress, he gave vent to the most poignant distress; cursing the ignorance, folly, and caprice of the whole human race,

and above all, a profession which depended upon this very caprice of such fools for its existence. The result of these bitter cogitations was a broken and disturbed sleep, imbibed with dreams of poverty, worse, if possible, than what he daily suffered when awake to all its hungry effects. Having with all his cares thus "murdered sleep," as the poet expresses it, he started up, and taking his treasure along with him, but not with the smallest intention of again invoking fortune to favour his efforts with the great; for of their assistance he had now resigned every thought. In fact, he wanted food after his long dream of hungry disappointment, and he was resolved not to go without it.

Having arrived at one of those necessary temples of Mammon, where usury triumphs in the spoils of distress, he confidently demanded five golden guineas, which we assure our readers were at that time as current as bank notes are now. The son of Levi expressed his surprise at such a demand, having several of his there already, locked up for half the sum. But upon the solemn

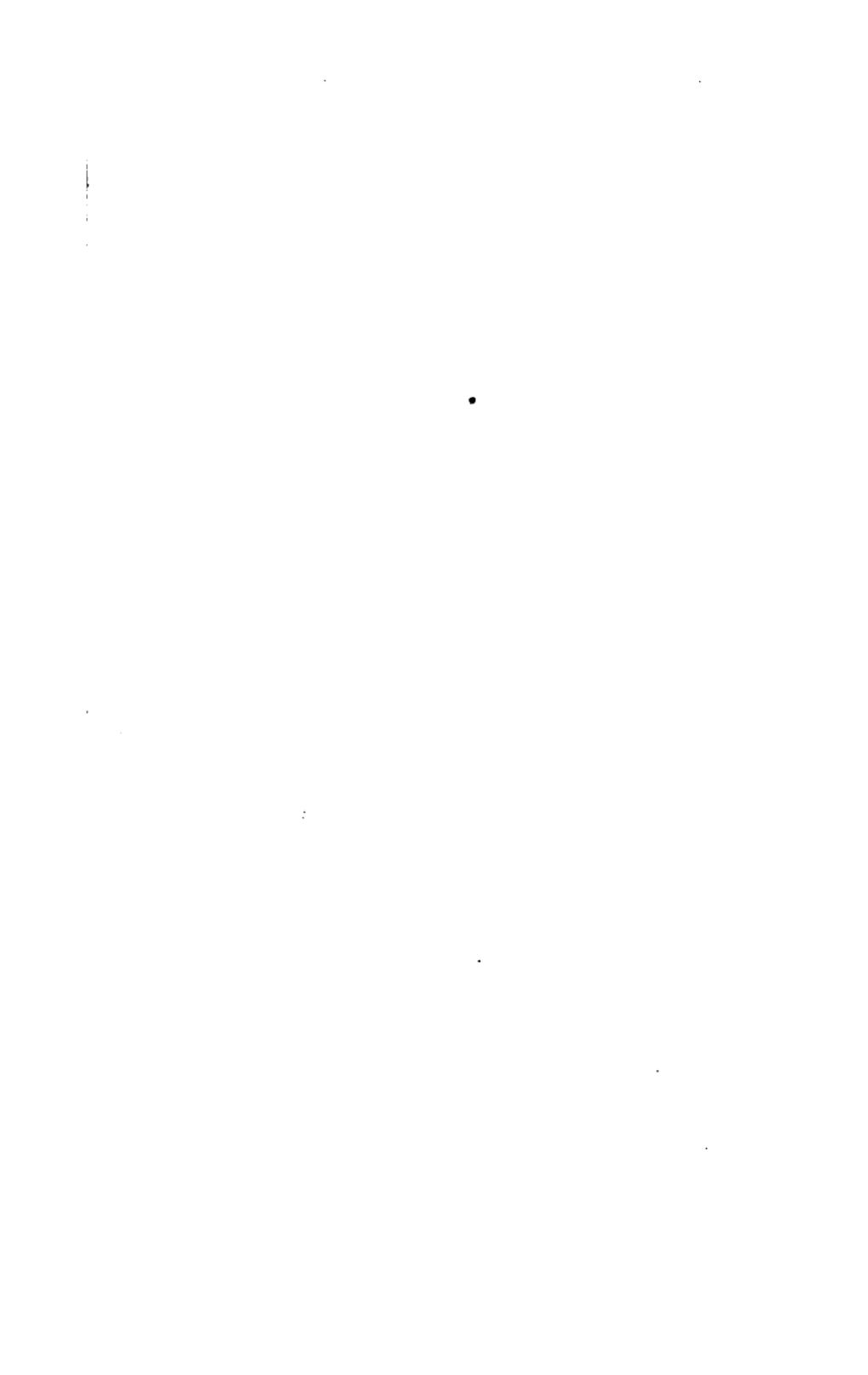
asseverations of the painter, that so far from being a production of his own, it had been painted little short of two centuries and a half since, by one of the greatest men that ever thumbed a palette.

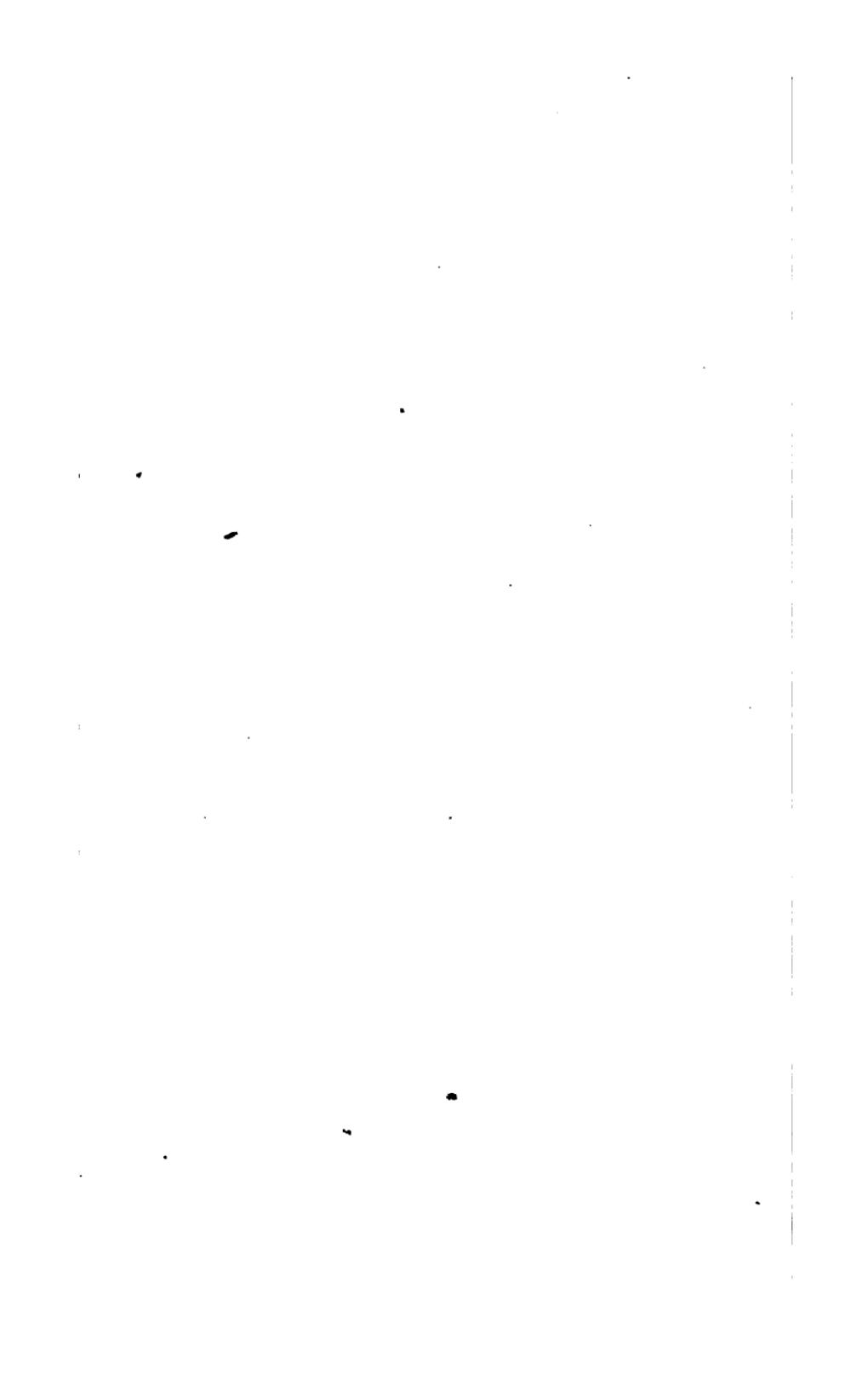
Now as the Levite could not bring himself to believe half what he heard, so neither could any thing the other urged induce him to part with a sum proportioned even to that belief. And our poor painter was obliged to content himself with two guineas, or go without food for that day. With this sum he betook himself to a coffee-house in the neighbourhood of Charing Cross, where he breakfasted and read the papers. While the waiter was bringing him the change of one of his pieces, he was carelessly glancing his eye over a file of newspapers that lay on the table, when by mere accident the advertisement which the picture-dealers had put in, offering a reward for the picture, struck him. He immediately took a pen and ink, and copied it off accurately in his sketch-book. Which having done, he repaired without delay to the pawn-broker, and shewing him this unde-

niable document, began to triumph in this fresh proof of his veracity. The honest descendant of Levi acknowledged, that if this statement was correct, there was no doubt from his description of the picture being genuine ; and promised to satisfy himself in the course of the morning, by reading the paper from which his old customer had copied it*.

* Our readers are earnestly requested to suspend their curiosity respecting the fate of our Picture, while we endeavour to fill up the chasm between *this* and the *Third Volume* with a genuine Memoir of a late much-regretted painter, and lamented friend of his faithful biographer. The lively interest which the public have lately manifested by their unexampled partiality for every production of his inimitable pencil, brought before them, and the pretty general enquiry made at our publisher's, respecting the Sketch of his life now about to be submitted to them, renders its appearance in this place peculiarly necessary.

We shall, therefore, endeavour to discharge the sacred promise given to our poor friend, and to the public, through the medium of the *British Press*, by a letter, therein published last New-Year's day, 1805 ; by commencing our *Second Volume* with delineating the true character of one of those giants in the divine art, which Nature now and then brings forth amongst us, to mock the erroneous calculation of *pedants*, and the pigny efforts of *mere* study.





5 sets complete
Mr B. Quantock
KKP 9/11/60



